UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS: MOVING ON

BY

ROBERT FRANCIS MORRIS

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in

Educational Administration

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Fall 1997

National Library of Canada
Acquisitions and Bibliographic Services
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada
Acquisitions et services bibliographiques
395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-23102-X

Canada

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR: ROBERT FRANCIS MORRIS

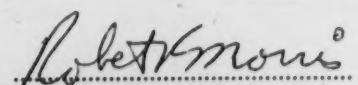
TITLE OF THESIS: NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS: MOVING ON

DEGREE: DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED: 1997

Permission is hereby granted to the University of Alberta Library to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves all other publication and other rights in association with the copyright in the thesis, and except as hereinbefore provided, neither the thesis nor any substantial portion thereof may be printed or otherwise reproduced in any material form whatever without the author's prior written permission.



(Student's signature)
150 McLaren Crescent
Fort McMurray, Alberta. T9K 1J8

Date: October 3, 1997

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduated Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Nursing Education Program Administrators: Moving On submitted by Robert Francis Morris in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Administration.

J. Fris, Supervisor

J. da Costa

M. L. Haughey

R. G. McIntosh

D. Cullen

J. Epp
External Examiner

Date: Oct. 1, 1997

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to
the nursing education program administrators
who have helped build nursing education in Canada
and whose first person stories have gone untold and
may never be known to the nursing profession.
The thesis is also dedicated to those many friends
and family members who helped me along the career
path that I have taken in nursing.

ABSTRACT

The career stories of nursing education program administrators including the reasons for leaving their career positions, their nursing program leadership positions, and how they handled the leaving from their nursing education leadership positions--need to be told. This study provided an opportunity to explore and gain understanding from such stories.

Nine participants who had left their leadership positions volunteered to tell their career stories, beginning with their entry into nursing, the various positions they had held, and especially their positions as nursing education program administrators. The participants were asked to explain the reasons they had for leaving their career positions and how they handled leaving the nursing education leadership position. In this study leaving a position is termed "moving on".

The study was guided by principles of explanatory narrative inquiry and organizational behaviour concepts. The stories were examined for commonalities, which were placed in categories and themes that related to why participants move on and how they handle leaving their nursing education leadership positions.

Two thematic strands wove through the stories that explain why the participants moved on in their career positions. The first was success, opportunity, choice, chance, and influence of others on career changes; and the second was the influence of personal and program challenges and position related conflicts. The themes of caring for colleagues and the nursing program goals wove through the leaving process from the position of nursing education program administrator.

The data indicated that reasons for moving on are very personal and varied; hence no conclusions should be made using the findings of this study on any similar group. Further investigation using a different research method to gather data and a larger sample may produce conclusions which explain why nursing education program administrators left their career positions as well as their nursing education program administrator positions. Further study may enhance our understanding of how the nursing education program administrators handled the leaving from the program leadership positions.

Acknowledgements

Many people have assisted and contributed to the completion of this study through their kindness, interest, enthusiasm, and support. I am very appreciative of the nine participants who volunteered to tell their personal stories. I am very appreciative of the committee members for their patience with me and my exploration of thoughts and ideas. Dr. Joe Fris, my supervisor, has been invaluable in aiding me in clarifying and thinking through what it was I was trying to achieve, in his ability to communicate ideas to pursue over the telephone and in his office meetings, in his ability to speak the same language that I was familiar with and without this bond would have never been able to pursue the challenges that I undertook. To Dr. Gordon McIntosh, who provided assistance from the first few pages of my draft proposal during the early days of taking course work to the end of the writing phase, I owe a great deal of my original ideas for my study. Dr. Margaret Haughey has provided thoughtful comments and directions to pursue throughout the proposal phase and the writing of the dissertation. I would also like to thank Dr. Dallas Cullen who provided thoughtful critiques and suggestions for direction, and Dr. Joe de Costa for his role as committee chair and his suggestions and ideas for me to pursue that created depth to the study. Also, I would like to thank Dr. J. Epp, Associate Professor, Lakehead University, Faculty of Education for acting as the external reviewer for her comments and suggestions regarding my study.

I would like to thank my wife, Sheila, for her patience and dedication at providing love and understanding during the onerous task that seemed to go on forever. I am especially grateful to Melissa Thompson for her skills in transcribing and her ability to teach me

computer skills

associated with the software that I used on my computer. I am grateful to the editorial skills of Mary Anne Bruce and her ability to take what I was saying and make sure it was in proper format and structure.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE	Page
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
Statement of the Study Questions	4
Significance of the Study	5
Definition of Terms	6
Delimitations and Limitations	7
CHAPTER TWO	
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	8
Reasons for Leaving a Position	8
A Turnover Perspective on Leaving a Position	18
Summary	21
CHAPTER THREE	
METHODOLOGY	23
Research Perspective	23
Sources of Stories	27
Method of Story Collection and Development of First-Person Stories	28
Interpretation of Stories	33
Assuring Quality in a Narrative Study	34
Ethical Considerations	38
CHAPTER FOUR	
THE NINE STORIES	39
Introduction to the Stories	39
The Story of Louise	41
The Story of Sarah	50
The Story of Mary	57

The Story of Laura 70
The Story of Anna 82
The Story of Josie 104
The Story of Sue 119
The Story of Betsy 132
The Story of Rose 153
CHAPTER FIVE
INTERPRETATION OF THE NINE STORIES 162
Success and Its Influence on Moving On 162
Opportunity 162
Right Place at the Right Time 171
No Interest in Being An Administrator 171
Intuition 173
Job Accomplishment 173
Change Agent 174
Influence of Significant Others on Moving On 175
Family 176
Mentors, Supervisors, Colleagues, and Friends 178
Influence of Position-Related Conflicts and Stress on Moving On 183
Interpersonal and Organizational Conflicts 184
Conflicts Involving a Power Struggle 187
Stress 188
A Need For Personal Growth and Challenge and Its Influence On Moving On 189

Personal Growth Through Education 190
Personal Growth and Challenge 193
Leaving the Leadership Position 195
Caring Attitude 196
Closure 199
Themes 202
Summary 206
CHAPTER SIX
Review of the Study, Findings From the Nine Stories, Relating Findings to the Literature, Recommendations for Future Studies, and Personal Reflections 210
Review of the Study 210
Statement of the Study Questions 210
Research Design 210
Findings From the Nine Stories 214
Relating Findings to Prior Literature 220
Recommendations for Future Studies 235
Personal Reflections 238
REFERENCES 242

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I have been a nursing educator for the past twenty-four years and for ten and one-half years I was an administrator of a nursing education program at the Registered Nurse diploma level in a community college setting. I had not planned to adopt program administration as a career. I completed a Masters of Education in Educational Administration while I was an instructor at a community college. During the Masters program I became interested in being a program administrator. Soon after I completed the program I was able to attain a position of program administrator at a community college in another province. I left an instructor position to take the risk of being a program leader at a newly-established diploma registered nurse (RN) program. I don't believe that I had lofty goals but I had confidence in myself and I had worked with various program leaders who used a variety of leadership styles in managing a nursing education program. As I developed leadership skills in the position, I believed that the position was well-respected and that it was desirable to attain in one's nursing education career. I also believed that one would stay in the position for ten or more years, just to learn the complex aspects of the position and to enjoy the pleasures of the job.

Stories explaining why program administrators were leaving their leadership positions became of interest to me, especially when I considered the number of administrators who were leaving only a few years after they started such positions. In one Canadian province, over a ten-year period, sixteen full-time nursing education program administrators left their administrative positions. During that time some

programs had more than one person leave the position and a few programs did not have any one leave the position. Of the sixteen administrators, four retired, one finished a term appointment, and the others left for reasons unknown to the author. The length of time spent as an administrator varied; sometimes it was as little as two years. I was aware that many of the administrators had held other jobs over their careers (so they were used to moving on to new positions) yet I was not privy to any discussions as to why they were leaving the nursing education administrator position.

One of the responsibilities of my job was to attend provincial meetings held by the nursing education program administrators. These meetings took place three times a year either in one of the larger urban centres or, occasionally, in a rural environment--away from the busy distractions of an urban centre. During the May meetings various administrators would announce that they were leaving their positions. Some would not say anything about why they were leaving their program leadership positions. I am not aware of any informal conversations held at coffee or dinner as to why they were doing so. Occasionally one of the administrators would announce a retirement or a move to a new job, but these events were not discussed during the meetings. Why were no stories told to their provincial peers about the circumstances surrounding their moving on?

In addition, the literature I reviewed did not reveal any stories about the careers of nursing education program administrators who leave their nursing education leadership positions.

I believe there is a need for their stories to be told and recorded in

a first-person autobiographical form. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) state that "humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives" (p. 2). For Heinrich (1992), "stories [by nurses] speak eloquently to nurses because they sound themes that resonate with nurses' lives and practices" (p. 141). She goes on to note that "nurses lack stories to help them shape their identities as professionals" (p.141), therefore stories can provide information on role models for nurses. Stories allow the teller to pass on to others personal experiences that may be of benefit. Similarly, Sandelowski (1991, p.163) believes that stories provide models for our lives and aid in the formation or justification of morals.

The autobiographical form gives administrators the opportunity to tell their life experiences (Denzin, 1989, p. 17) in a first-person account rather than through someone such as myself in a biographical format. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) state that "narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience" (p. 2).

Martin (cited in Frank, 1986) noted that "the average tenure for a nursing dean is three years" (p. 59). Similarly, Princeton and Gaspar (cited in Gaspar, 1990) in their study of nursing education chairpersons reported that 37% of the participants indicated they were going to stay on the job or move to a higher administrative position. They also reported that 47% of the participants intended to leave or were leaving their jobs and that a further 7% were retiring. Possible reasons for both frequent change and public silence are provided by Woodtli (1987) who, in a study of sources of conflict between nursing faculty members' and

deans' conflict-handling styles, found that "almost one fifth of the deans were in their first year of the deanship while almost half (43%) had been in their current position less than two years. Half (49%) of the deans were holding their first deanship" (p. 274). Although the preceding authors described turnover data for nursing education program administrators, none of them recounted the story of a program leader leaving a position or explained why administrators left their positions. The literature neither adequately explains such turnover nor provides stories explaining why registered nurses who are nursing education program administrators in either Canada or the United States leave their positions of program leadership.

Miller, Heller, Moore, and Sylvia (1987) concluded that during the thirty years prior to their study on nursing education administration very little research had been conducted which concentrated on nursing education administration.

In summary, my review of the literature confirms that there is little information about why nursing education program administrators leave their positions and I believe a study of this topic would be relevant. I have collected explanatory first-person narratives and interpreted the stories told by nursing education program administrators who have left their positions.

Statement of the Study Questions

The purpose of the study is to address this lack of information on the topic by seeking answers to the following questions: What are the first-person career stories of nursing education program administrators who voluntarily left their positions as nursing education program

administrators? What are their explanations or reasons for leaving their positions during their careers and in particular their nursing education program administrator positions? An additional question was added during the pilot study at the suggestion of the participant: How did the administrators handle leaving the nursing education leadership positions?

Significance of the Study

The stories of nursing education program administrators leaving their career positions including their nursing education leadership positions have not been told, nor have the reasons why they left the positions been studied. Examination of how leaders handled leaving from the nursing education leadership position will be of benefit to other nursing program leaders. Information gathered will add to the knowledge base for the administration of nursing education which, according to Miller et al. (1987), Gasper (1990), and Hannah (1981), is not well-developed. Results from the study will also assist present nursing education administrators to understand why others have left similar positions, which may aid them in making personal career decisions. The findings may also aid in the design of personnel policies and procedures (Hannah,1981), in particular those regarding the selection of prospective program leaders. The results should help superordinates of the administrators to understand important aspects of their subordinates' positions, thus aiding in retaining nursing education leaders or in assisting nursing education program leaders who are in the process of leaving their positions. The position of program administrator is one in which individuals may have few readily-available peers with whom to

discuss the role (Gaspar, 1990). Consequently, the decision to leave a position may have to be carried out without benefit of discussing the subject with anyone who has left a similar position. The study may aid such a person in understanding the moving-on process that other program administrators have gone through, especially the pre-leaving stage. Finally the study will also provide a record of first-person stories of nursing education program administrators which gives the reader the opportunity to compare their lived experiences with those in the study.

Definitions of Terms

Nursing education program administrator--refers to those leaders who were or are directly responsible for diploma or baccalaureate registered nurse programs located in community colleges, hospitals, or universities. The term also includes program leaders who are responsible for post-registered nurse baccalaureate programs as well as graduate programs. All the administrators interviewed for the study were registered nurses.

Moving on--refers to the voluntary process in which the nursing education program administrator leaves a program leadership position. The term also refers to leaving a position prior to assuming another program leadership position.

Leader or leadership position -- a synonym for nursing education program administrator and the position held as head of the nursing programs under its direction. Location of the leadership may be a hospital program, a community college, or a university. Another title for the leadership position is chief executive nursing educator.

Institution--refers to either a hospital, a community college, or a

degree granting university in which a nursing program is located and which is or was the place of employment for the participant.

Career--refers to the nursing positions that the participants held.

Delimitations and Limitations

A number of delimitations and limitations are relevant to this study. Delimitations. All the participants were registered nurses who voluntarily left their program leadership positions. Only those participants who were available within one or two days of driving from the researcher's home were chosen due to funding restraints.

Limitations. All participants interviewed were females since the defined population of registered nurse program administrators contained no males in a permanent position. Since the length of time that had elapsed since participants left their position was considerable, their remembered reasons for leaving their positions may vary from reality. Since the stories told were limited to a defined group, the findings of this study should not be generalized to the population of nursing education program administrators.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In the literature about nursing education program administrators, there is no information why they leave their positions. The literature about the general population and other professionals (such as registered nurse, nurse executives, and doctorally-prepared nurses) does include such explanations. These may be grouped under the following headings.

Reasons For Leaving A Position

An intuitive need for change. The Oxford Dictionary (1991) defines "intuitive" as an adjective meaning "perceived by intuition" or "immediate insight" (p. 623). Loden (cited in Dunham, Fisher, and Snelson, 1991) states that

> Women made career decisions more intuitively, based on how the job felt to them. If it felt right or was an opportunity--even if unplanned--women would take it. Generally women did not make career decisions on an overall plan. Instead they emphasized doing the current job well. (p.149)

Galamer and Heidegger (cited in Mitchell, 1994, p. 2) indicate reasons for moving on will have started to accumulate within the leader so when the feeling of intuition occurs (that it is time to move on) the leader may very well be putting together thoughts and experiences that have been lived in the past and are now ready to be implemented with an action such as leaving a position. In a similar vein, Shorr and Zimmerman (cited in Dunham, et al., 1991, p. 150) state that, in making career decisions, being in the right place at the right time, and with some luck and a willingness to seize opportunities, helped hospital nurse executives to get ahead. Dunham et al. (1991, p. 152) in their study of

hospital nurse executives, found that many executives used the following statements--'felt right' or 'evolved from a higher power'--as beliefs that directed their career development. Some executives said that they felt they had to be flexible, recognize opportunities, and be open to change to get new positions. Others said there was a need to accept a higher level of challenge beyond that which their present positions offered.

Hall, de Tornyay, and Mitsunaga (1983, pp. 274-277) surveyed deans of nursing of graduate programs in the United States regarding the deans' perceptions of their future careers. The authors found that deanship is regarded as only a step on the career ladder: some deans planned to stay on as faculty after their terms were completed; younger deans tended to aspire to university administration positions; if moving, most deans preferred to move to schools with excellent reputations and greater challenges; fewer deans in the 1980s than during the early 1970s wanted to stay in the deanship until retirement; and few deans planned their careers in advance.

Stress and burnout. Stress is a well-known factor causing burnout, and it may cause a person to consider leaving a position. Therefore, vacating the nursing education program administrator's position may be attributable to the process called "burnout". Armstrong (cited in McConnell, 1982) defines the stages of burnout in terms of "the extent to which workers have become separated from the original meaning and purpose of their work, and the degree to which workers express estrangement from their clients, jobs, co-workers, or agency" (p. 92).

Alexander (cited in McConnell, 1982) states that

> The term describes a condition of severe exhaustion found primarily among individuals who work in helping professions.

> Certainly, nurses as care givers are especially vulnerable to burnout. The syndrome is characterized by physical and emotional fatigue, disillusionment, cynicism, depression, and a sense of total futility. Burnout connotes excessive demands on the strength, energy, and resources of those who aid others. (p. 92)

Personal expectations can be a source of burnout. Spaniol and Caputo (cited in McConnell, 1982) developed the following list of personal sources of burnout common to professional workers:

1. Not setting limits
2. Not paying attention to our needs and wants
3. Not communicating our feelings
4. Isolating ourselves physically and psychologically
5. Political nature of work
6. Powerlessness
7. Ignoring positive attention from others
8. Lack of professional identity
9. Becoming over involved
10. Lack of professional survival skills
11. Inability to live with the 'grey areas' of life (p. 112)

Applebaum (cited in McConnell, 1982, p. 113) developed a list of stress factors within the individual that affect burnout, including low self-esteem, "workaholism", compromised values, family demands, marriage, hidden agenda, rigid personality, over-aggressiveness, lack of control, fear of success/failure, and the inability to let go. Although this is only a partial list, it may be of significant relevance to nursing education program administrators in assisting them in making the decision to leave the leadership positions.

Pines and Kanner (cited in Robinson, Roth, Keim, Levenson, Flentje, and Bashor, 1991) state that consequences of burnout in the nursing profession include "absenteeism, tardiness, vague somatic complaints, conflicts within the working environment, and eventual job

turnover or career separation" (p. 223).

Dick (1992, p. 344-345) found that burnout did exist among doctorally-prepared nurse faculty and that management style, collegial support, and time devoted to research, clinical practice, and professional service were strong predictors of burnout among doctorally-prepared nurse faculty.

Nursing hospital administrators, according to Clark (cited in McConnell, 1982, p. 86), are reluctant to care for their health and well-being and therefore are susceptible to burnout. Administrators frequently work extra hours, take office work home, and often do not participate in community activities. Freunberger (cited in McConnell, 1982, p.86) states that the administrator faces a great deal of both internal and external pressure to succeed. Nursing administrators in hospitals face pressures of denial and guilt if they do not achieve the ideal. The relevance of the above to nursing education program administrators may be significant since program leaders will have similar program administration functions.

Although no articles were found about nursing education program leaders specifically one can expect the leaders would be exposed to common stress situations in their positions but how they respond to such stress needs to be studied.

Lack of interpersonal communications. Nurses who perceive themselves as having difficulty in communicating effectively with their superordinates or subordinates may perceive a need to leave a position. Effective communication is one of the major skills required of an administrator in any field and it is highly regarded as a requirement in a nursing

education leadership position (Shultz, 1986, p. 10-15). Shultz found that vice-presidents responsible for deans of nursing and nursing instructors expected the dean to have an effective communication style, especially skills in problem-solving, listening, and building relationships. Shultz also found that some faculty felt conflict, distrust, feelings of powerlessness, and power struggles within the department were directly related to the dean's poor communication skills.

Mobley (cited in Gurney, 1990, p. 2) states that turnover may have a negative impact on the psychological and social patterns of communication and group process for those who remain in the work environment. Although Mobley and Gurney were not dealing with nursing education program administrators, communication established by the leader during the time of employment with the staff is similar, although the effect of the leader's departure may be different. Consequently, there is a need to study stories to find out if communication as perceived by the leaders played a role in their leaving leadership positions.

Lack of opportunity to perform the caring role. One of the most important roles for a nursing education administrator is caring for employees (Boykin, 1990, p. 247). Caring is often thought of as something one does only with patients in the caring environment until they are "able to independently care for the self" (Swanson, 1991, p. 161). Swanson (1991) provides a definition of caring that could be relevant for an administrator: "caring is a nurturing way of relating to a valued other toward whom one feels a personal sense of commitment and responsibility" (p. 165). This definition is broad enough to include

leadership activities but it indicates that a program administrator could experience the loss of a caring role if the definitive expectations were not met while being a leader. Caring is learned by administrators through a lengthy process of socialization by the nursing profession. By the time they are program leaders, most nursing education program administrators will have had numerous years of caring for others-both patients and colleagues-within the nursing profession.

Watson (1987) and Leininger (1984, cited in Smith, 1993, p. 66) have identified caring as the essence of nursing. Ray (1985, cited in Smith, 1993) states that caring is "the attention to growth and actualization through copresence and love" (p. 66). Bach and Torbert (1982, cited in Komorita, Doehring, & Hirchert, 1991) "defined caring as paying attention to and seeking knowledge of a person's likes and how they think, act, and feel" (p. 24). The authors mentioned above use definitions that can be accepted by an administrator as an ideal that should be achieved via the administrator's role function. Any perception by an administrator that caring for employees is not being carried out would lead to an interpretation that role achievement is not being met. Faculty who are not happy with the caring attitude of the program leader will communicate the message that there is an absence of caring present in the administrator. Smith (1993) states that "the nurse administrator [within the hospital] expresses this caring orientation through advocacy and action for humane and ethical health care, and by supportive personnel policies and management-employee relationships" (p. 66). Miller (1987, cited in Smith, 1993) states that the "nurse administrator creates the milieu in which caring is a normative value within the

organizational culture" (p. 66). Failure to promote such values can be communicated to the administrator by feedback from the employees and can lead to personal stress or conflict with others.

Development of a caring attitude towards employees becomes a goal for the nursing education program administrator and, if not carried out, may raise the concern of the faculty, staff and those who evaluate the administrator. The literature reviewed did not deal with nursing education leaders having or not having a caring attitude towards employees, nor did it deal with the impact this may have on a program leader's consideration of leaving the leadership position.

Low job satisfaction. Gasper (1990) identified job satisfaction as being "significantly associated with the propensity to leave a position" (p. 173). Those who were dissatisfied had a "slight to moderate tendency to leave the position" (p.173). Gasper (1990, p. 173) found that 32% said they would change to another position and 9% were unsure of their futures.

George (cited in Carpenter, 1989, p. 256) found that 21% of the middle managers (associate deans, assistant deans, or department chairpersons of nursing) plan to apply for a deanship at a university in the United States. "Seventy-nine percent indicated they did not intend to remain in a leadership position at all" (p. 257). In comparison, Uehling (cited in Carpenter, 1989, p. 257) found that 32% of academic middle managers for subjects other than nursing indicated that they did not intend to remain in leadership positions. Carpenter (1989, p. 263) found that increasing autonomy, expanding opportunities for learning, personal accomplishment, and self-direction, and increasing the sense of stability may reduce the high attrition rate of middle managers in university

nursing programs and hence increase the proportion of middle managers which moves on to deanship in nursing.

Similarly, Yoder (1995) found in army nurses that career development relationships such as mentoring influenced job satisfaction and intent to stay in a position. The stronger the mentor influence on job satisfaction for the army nurse, the less likely the army nurse would be to leave the army. Also, Irvine and Evans (1995) found "that as job satisfaction decreases, turnover behaviour increases" among nurses (p. 247). Price and Mueller (cited in Mueller and McLoskey, 1990, p. 113) also indicate that "job satisfaction, the degree of positive affective orientation toward employment" is one of the most common reasons for nurses' burnout, commitment, and turnover found in the literature on nurses.

Based on what these authors indicate it is reasonable to expect that nursing education program administrators would leave their positions if job satisfaction were low and would stay in their positions if job satisfaction were high and if so influenced by co-workers or mentors.

Conflict with others. Conflict between deans of nursing and their faculty is common, especially interpersonal conflict (Woodtli, 1987 p. 275). In this study conflict is thought of as "episodes" (Pondy, cited in Cavanagh, 1991, p. 1255) of incompatible activities (Deutsch, 1973, p. 10) or inability to agree on goals (Schmidt and Kochan, cited in Beck and Betz, 1974, p. 60) between the participants as they proceed through their careers and those with whom they work, such as staff, colleagues, faculty, and supervisors. Conflict between participants and organizational goals is also considered. Episodes may consist of conflicts of values, role

expectations, differences in perception, lack of communication, organizational differences, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and groups (Ma, cited in Cavanagh, 1991, p. 1255; Filley, 1975, p. 2; Zuelke and Willerman, 1987, pp. 9-14; Anwar, 1983, p.312 and p. 317; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, 1964, pp. 18-21). These types of conflicts are common in the general population and may also be common among nurses. A conflict of power could exist as well. Possibly, conflict in the work environment could lead an administrator to question the desirability for a nursing program leadership position.

Shultz (1986) found that the nursing faculty, nursing deans, and vice- presidents thought that the ability to resolve conflict was an essential skill for a dean. Shultz concludes that her findings regarding the need for better conflict management skills required by deans of nursing may "explain the high turnover rate in dean positions" (p. 13). Woodtli (1986) states that research related to conflict "between deans of nursing and the faculty and the conflict-handling modes used by deans to achieve resolution is limited" (p. 273).

Since program leaders may also be parents, conflict between job requirements and parental responsibilities may be reason enough to leave a position. Gottlieb, Kelloway, Martin-Matthews (1996, pp. 112-113) found in a study of registered staff nurses that nurses who are very busy at work brought their work thoughts and feelings into their homes lives. Also nurses who provide a large amount of the parental responsibilities at home bring family concerns to the work environment. Both responses cause conflict within the nurse.

A need for new challenges. Nursing education program administrators

may feel the need to move to another job once they achieve a sense of job accomplishment (Gasper, 1990 p. 3). A sense of job satisfaction will evolve if goals the leader set were perceived to have been achieved. Some administrators of programs will leave their present positions in order to move to positions that offer what would be perceived to be a beneficial career move and a new challenge. Redmond (1991, pp. 228-238) found, while studying career pathways of deans of nursing programs, that the deans were influenced in their careers by early development of a need for education and achievement, positive female role models, and an early development of enjoyment of the role of being in-charge.

For those who planned to be a career administrator Scase and Goffee (1989) state that

> In many ways, it [the career] constitutes a set of organizing principles around which those in managerial and professional occupations are able to structure both their work and non-work lives. It enables managers, in particular, to make sense of what might otherwise appear as an almost random series of events and activities.----Those who have careers typically experience a sense of achievement and advancement largely because their jobs do not simply consist of undertaking tasks on a day-to-day basis, but instead, are directed to the attainment of longer-term personal goals (Sofer, 1970) (p. 78).

Scase and Goffee indicate that nurse educators may plan to be program leaders and those that do may perceive a need to progress through a series of related jobs (Scase and Goffee, 1989, p.79), such as program coordinator for clinical learning or curriculum, or as an associate dean of a nursing program in a university setting. Scase and Goffee (1989, p. 81) indicate that male managers have a pattern of expected progress in their

careers based on age categories, consisting of an *exploratory stage* in the 20s, a *building phase* in the 30s, and an *evaluation phase* in the 40s. Hennig and Jardim (1977) state that women "see a career as personal growth, as self-fulfillment, as satisfaction, as making a contribution to others, as doing what one wants to do" (p. 14)--all of which entail significant challenges.

Although the above information pertains to academic nursing middle managers at universities in the United States the information may have some relevance to nursing education program administrators leaving their positions.

A Turnover Perspective on Leaving a Position

Price (1977) defines turnover as " the degree of individual movement across the membership boundary of a social system" (p. 4). Leaders of nursing education programs moving from or to leadership positions from previous leadership positions meet Price's definition of turnover. He states that turnover is a process, and because it involves movement, it should be perceived as dynamic. Whether a person quits, is discharged, retires, or is hired by another institution is considered turnover by Price. Price does not consider promotion within an institution to be turnover. In a later publication Price and Mueller indicate that turnover also has a voluntary perspective, that is, employee initiation of movement across the membership boundary of an organization (cited in Mueller and Price, 1990, p. 321).

In this dissertation, a nurse educator who leaves the education leadership of a nursing program, but who stays in the same institution in another capacity, will be considered to have participated in turnover. The

membership boundary in nursing education administration is defined by the task of administrating an education program within the boundaries of a post-secondary institution. Those who quit and do not choose to continue at any work in nursing will still be considered as turnover in this study even though Price (1977, p. 8) does not consider such an action to be turnover. Although Price is interested in the number of employees who join or leave an organization, such factors are not relevant in this study because its focus is why the leaders move on from nursing education leadership positions and other positions in their career. Further data on employee turnover numbers are best left to a separate study.

Price (1977) defines determinants as "analytical variables which are believed to produce variations in turnover" (p. 24). Determinants *explain* why turnover occurred. Interpretation of the stories may produce an understanding of the determinants present in the stories and hence a better understanding of reasons for leaving a position.

Price (1977) and Mueller and Price (1990) have found many determinants for turnover, but the literature does not provide any insight into specific turnover determinants for nursing education program administrators.

Mueller and Price (1990) indicate that availability of job opportunities, general training, lowered job satisfaction and organization commitment, low pay, low social rewards, lack of community participation, effects of kinship responsibility, and poor work group cohesion all may lead to high turnover in staff (pp. 321-324, and p. 326).

Price (1977) lists the following turnover determinants that are

common in the population he studied:

> Successively higher amounts of pay will probably produce successively lower amounts of turnover; Successively higher amounts of integration [relationships] will probably produce successively lower amounts of turnover; Successively higher amounts of instrumental communication [based on role] will probably produce successively lower amounts of turnover; Successively higher amounts of formal communication [officially transmitted] will probably produce successively lower amounts of turnover; Successively higher amounts of centralization [power concentration] will probably produce successively higher amounts of turnover (pp. 68-76).

The determinants indicated by Price (1977) and Mueller and Price (1990) may be relevant to nursing education program administrators.

Gurney (1990) found the following determinants influence turnover of doctorate-prepared nurses: "opportunity, kinship responsibility, routinization, workload, autonomy, work group cohesion, communication up, communication down, resource adequacy, mentorship, performance, dual-career work motivation, positive affectivity, negative affectivity, pay, distributive justice, and promotion opportunity" (p. 30). Some of these determinants influence turnover directly while others influence lack of job satisfaction which leads to poor commitment, desire to quit, and intent to leave.

Models have been developed by various authors to provide an understanding of how turnover functions. Although it is not my intent to develop a model of turnover based on the stories told, it is helpful to explore ways of perceiving turnover.

March and Simon (1958, cited in Mobley, 1982) have two models to help explain the factors affecting turnover. The first model focuses on factors affecting perceived desirability of movement. The authors state

that "conformity of job to self; predictability of job relationships; [and] compatibility of job and other roles" all influence "satisfaction with the job" which in turn affects "perceived desirability of movement" (p.116). In a diagram the authors point out that "size of organization; and perceived possibility of intraorganizational transfer" influence "perceived desirability of movement" as well (p. 116) while a second diagram describes perceived ease of movement. The authors state that "propensity to search" and visibility of individual influence the "number of organizations visible" which leads a person to look at the "number of extraorganizational alternatives perceived" by the employee. As well, the authors state that "level of business activity, and personal characteristics of participants" influence the "number of extraorganizational alternatives perceived" by the employee, which in turn affects the employee's "perceived ease of movement" (p. 117). Both models provide a potential guide for analysis of turnover within nursing education administration.

Summary

In the literature reviewed there are no stories regarding the careers of nursing education program administrators and their leaving their positions. There are also no references to reasons for program leaders leaving their positions. As a researcher, I am somewhat surprised that no article or study has been carried out on the topic since there are many schools of nursing in Canada and the United States and a large number of graduate students who are studying nursing.

The literature reviewed presents numerous reasons for leaving a position in a variety of jobs such as: intuition, right place at the right time, felt right, recognized opportunities, conflict with others and organization

values, and burnout. Literature on the nursing profession lists reasons for leaving a position as: poor communication skills, achievement of a job, conflict with staff, workload, performance and promotion opportunity, and the decision to pursue a career change. Documented explanations in the general population for leaving a position are very general in nature, and therefore it is difficult to assume that the same reasons hold true for nursing education program administrators. Consequently, there is need for a study that attempts to understand the explanations of the reasons why nursing education program administrators leave their positions.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The research design is described in this chapter in terms of the research perspective; sources of stories; method of story collection and development of first-person stories; interpretation of the stories; assuring quality in a narrative study; and ethical considerations.

Research Perspective

Because the literature does not contain information on the topic of the study, I used an explanatory narrative inquiry approach (Carter, 1993; Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988; Sandelowski, 1991) in order to obtain from the participants first-person stories of their careers; reasons for leaving each position, especially the program administrative positions; and how they handled the leaving from the nursing education program administrative positions. Storytelling via an unstructured interview gave the participants opportunity to recall and tell about relevant and meaningful events they had experienced (Mishler, 1986, p. 119). Sandelowski (1991) explains that "In explanatory narrative research, the researcher seeks to render an accounting via narrative of why something happened" (p. 163) and that these narratives provide "a framework for: a) understanding the human being as a subject of nursing inquiry [the nursing education program administrator]; b) conceptualizing the interview [the stories]; and c) analyzing and interpreting interview data [searching for categories and themes]" (p. 162). Polkinghorne (1988) points out that explanatory research

is retrodictive rather than predictive, that is, it is a retrospective gathering of events into an account that makes the ending reasonable

and believable. It is more than a mere chronicling or listing of the events along a time line: it configures the events in such a way that their parts in the whole story become clear (p. 171).

This allows for provision of explanations and reasons by the participants within the stories, therefore allowing an interpretation of their parts and whole by the researcher in order to give meaning to the stories of the participants.

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) describe narrative as

> both phenomenon and method. Narrative names the structured quality of experience to be studied, and it names the patterns of inquiry for its study. To preserve this distinction we use the reasonably well-established device of calling the phenomenon "story" and the inquiry "narrative." Thus, we say that people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience (p. 2).

In this study, the phenomenon consists of the administrators' first-person autobiographical stories and the inquiry is explanatory narrative in design.

For the explanatory narrative I am using the first-person autobiography format (Abbs, 1974; Henderson and McGettigan, 1994, pps. 335-348; Riessman, 1993) of storytelling. Gusdorf (1980, cited in Denzin, 1989, p. 34) defines autobiography as a "first-person account (which actually takes the third-person form) of a set of life experiences". I was influenced by Rose's (1993) book, the *Norton Book of Women's Lives* which included excerpts from autobiographies of women's lives, and especially by the autobiography of Onnie Lee Logan, an obstetrical midwife in the southern United States. Rose used her autobiography, called *Motherwit: An Alabama Midwife's Story* (1989), as an example of

oral history. The autobiographer was aided in writing the story by a collaborator and from this the idea to use first-person stories evolved, where my role in the first-person story was one of a collaborator, that is, one who gathered the story and adapted the story into a chronological format. The participants are the storytellers, using a chronological recall of lived events to explain their reasons for moving on to other positions and how they handled the leaving process from the program administrative position. By using the first-person autobiographical format readers are not directed by my interpretive voice as they would be if the stories were in the third-person. Also, by using first-person stories the reading is not coloured by my lived experiences. Bohman, Hiley, and Shusterman (cited in Polifroni and Packard, 1995, p. 39) call it "doubly hermeneutic", that is interpretations (third-person stories by the researcher) of the interpretations (the recalled events or stories) told by the participants.

Lyons (1977) states that "the purpose of autobiography is not simply to create a record of our lives, but to create a meaningful record" (p. 331). Similarly, Abbs (1974) states that the "central concern of all autobiography is to describe, evoke and generally recreate the development of the author's experience" (p. 6). The first-person stories will be available for illustrative purposes (Lyons, 1977, p. 338) both in this research study and any further research that may be generated by the stories. The reader is given an opportunity to be aware of a life story uninterrupted by my research purposes. Bailey (1996) states that, to enhance validation of narrative analysis, the analysis should have "presentations of original data [first-person stories], transcription

information and a clear outline of each step of the reconstructive process [adapting and forming the first-person stories in cooperation with the participant]" (p. 192). This allows the reader to "validate the interpretations or draw alternative conclusions"(p.192) to the interpretations of the researcher.

All of the participants interviewed had left their program administrative positions, so the stories told are recollections of experiences that may vary from reality as it occurred. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) identified this phenomenon, noting that "we restory earlier experiences as we reflect on later experiences so the stories and their meaning shift and change over time" (p. 9). Mishler (1990) also indicates that the information gathered from an interview "is a reconstruction of the past, shaped by the particular context of its telling" (p. 427). At the same time, I have tried to ensure that no details provided could definitively identify any of the participants.

Since similar stories are not found in the literature, I believe, that by making the stories available to the reader of the study, the stories themselves become the focus of the study and my interpretation of the explanations or reasons become secondary to the explanations given by the participants. Interpretation of the participants' explanations or reasons, although important, becomes supportive information to the reader (Sandelowski, 1991, p. 162). The reader may pursue the stories or the interpretation of the stories or both, resulting in personal conclusions or evocation of personal intimate feelings by the stories or my interpretations of the stories.

Sources of Stories

The participants in this study were registered nurses who at one time administered a nursing education program and who decided to leave their leadership positions. The participants all left their positions of program administrator on a voluntary basis--some retired, some accepted other leadership positions, and some returned willingly to a faculty position. Administrators who were relieving for a sabbatical replacement were not included in the study. Those administrators who had term appointments designated by a collective agreement were not included in the list of potential participants, unless the participants decided not to renew the term appointment permitted by a contractual agreement. In the sample I chose to study, only two or three participants had been terminated from their positions and could not be found, given my financial limitations . The participants were all females. Length of time since the participants left their positions varied. Each candidate who was thought to have met the criteria for being a participant was sent a letter requesting voluntary participation in the research. Nine candidates volunteered to participate in the study. All other potential participants had left the province of their program location and were not approached due to my financial restraints.

I recognise that a number of factors have influenced the stories I heard. I had been in my position for over ten years so I knew some of the persons being referred to and some of the institution issues discussed. I also know that my persona influenced the stories. I do believe that I represented to the participants a familiar interviewer. They seemed to be relaxed while they told their stories. I had announced at a meeting of

program leaders, where most of them were present, that my position as an administrator had been eliminated. I believe this knowledge of my situation allowed them to be open with me during the interviews. It also entered my mind that my being male would influence the story telling but I do believe this did not make any difference.

Method of Story Collection and Development of First-Person Stories

The interview format was chosen because of my desire to collect personal, in-depth, explanatory, narrative accounts of the nursing leaders' careers including why they left their positions (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988; Sandelowski, 1991) and how they handled the leaving process from the nursing education leadership position. This format allows for the development of first-person stories in collaboration between the participants and the researcher. Clandinin and Connelly (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p. 415) believe that by being interviewed the participant will have an opportunity to allow her personal self to 'come out' and be part of a social history. I wanted a record of the person's reasons for leaving career positions, especially the nursing education program position and I wanted the record to be in first-person. Wilson (1993, p. 225) states that an empathetic listener invites participants to tell stories which may assist the storytellers to explain complex feelings or perceptions concerning why they carried out an activity. The interviewer also has an opportunity to clarify statements made by participants, which cannot be done via a questionnaire. Interviews allow the researcher to discover the unexpected while listening to the storyteller.

Once the letters of permission had been received from the

participants the participants were telephoned to arrange appointments. At that time, they were again informed of both the nature of the research and the questions of the research study. Since I knew the participants from my work experiences with them I was also able to re-establish contact with them, sharing with them personal knowledge of what they and I had been doing and other general personal information as old acquaintances do after not meeting or not talking to each other for some time.

The interviews were carried out at a location of the participant's choice. I met in the homes of two of the participants who had retired. One meeting was in a busy nursing department and was even interrupted by a student wanting to work on a computer in the same room. We continued the interview with no difficulty. The others held the meetings in their offices where a few were interrupted by telephone calls but that did not pose a problem. The tape recorder was turned off and started again so the interruption did not cause any difficulty with the storytelling.

Riessman (1993, p. 10, Fig. 1.1) recommends that the researcher proceed through five steps of research when using narrative methods--attending, telling, transcribing, analyzing, and reading. I adapted her method somewhat so that the attending becomes the preparation of the participants by asking them before the taped interview, that is, over the telephone to explain why they left their career positions, why they left the administrator position, and how they handled leaving the nursing program leadership position. The question on how they handled the leaving process from the nursing program was added to the study based on explanations the field study participant provided regarding the leaving

process. Since they had from one to two months between the time the participant request letter was sent and the interview occurred they had adequate time to recall their careers and to think about the general questions that I had mentioned on the telephone.

When I arrived for the interview I restated the purpose and questions of the study. I asked them to start with the time they entered nursing as a student and end with the last day that they walked out of their administrator's office and said goodbye to their colleagues. I asked them to tell the story in sequence. I also stated that since I was using an interview format I would ask them questions about their story if I felt they needed to reexplain some point or I felt they did not address why they left a position.

The telling phase was the interview, where the participant was allowed to talk continuously (without questions or interruption) until she said that she had covered her career. In some interviews the participant would talk without need of questions and in other situations the participant was brief and did not address the study questions in enough detail. I then asked clarifying questions about leaving a position, based on my experiences and the literature (Mishler, 1986, p.69). This also gave me an opportunity to ask what was meant by what had been said. During this phase of the storytelling, I attempted to be sensitive so as not to interfere with the storytelling or to direct answers. I attempted to ask either clarification questions (based on what had been said) or questions that would encourage expansion of explanations that had been given which were very brief. I also indicated that I would be reviewing the text of the taped interview and if I had any questions about what was said I

would get back to them by telephone or letter (Riessman, 1993, p. 32).

Thorpe (1989, p. 38) states that the interviewer needs to suspend his or her pre-established judgments or biases from previous experience that may influence the participants to answer questions in a particular way. I did not find this to be a difficult task. I listened and refrained from commenting on similar experiences, to allow the story-teller to establish the plot of the story being told.

Transcription is referred to by Riessman (1993, p. 10) as the third step in the research process. I had the tapes transcribed. The transcriber was able to create a text format which captures the way a person talks when telling a story. This is called the "fixation" of action by Ricoeur (cited in Riessman, 1993, p. 11). I then edited out the preliminary questions asked by myself and adapted the text so it formed a first-person story that provided a chronological sequence to the career and the explanations of the participant. This stripping of the interview context from the narrative (Riessman, 1993, p. 51) provided the first-person autobiographical format that I was seeking. My opening statements to each person were different so this "stripping" removes the reader distraction of wanting to ask the researcher, "Why didn't you ask this question?"

Some of the participants talked an inordinate amount about other people such as husbands or bosses and with their permission I removed this text if it was not relevant to the focus of the study. Also, each story teller was given a pseudonym to provide anonymity. Abbs (1974) carried out the same activity in his book on autobiography, noting, "I would also like to point out that a few names have been changed to ensure

anonymity" (p.114).

Each first-person story text was then sent to the appropriate participant for review. The participant also received a copy of the interview text as transcribed. In the first-person story text, I included additional questions seeking more depth on explanations such as why she left a position or how she left the administrator position. Questions were noted on the side margin of the page next to the explanation requiring further development. Participants were given the choice of adding or deleting from the story text to make the story more acceptable to themselves or to remove any embarrassing statements.

Some of the participants chose to make a few editorial changes while others rewrote the text, which unfortunately took out some of the interview language characteristics such as pauses, inflections, and emphases. I had agreed with the participants, over the telephone or in writing, that rewriting the first-person story did not detract from the research method but enhanced the method based on Mishler's (1996, p. 119) intent to empower the participant. The intent of the interview was maintained by the participants when they rewrote any sentences from the original interview. This rewriting enhanced the explanatory nature of the study by allowing the participant to be more specific and to make changes to the parts of spoken text that they found to be embarrassing or to be using incorrect grammar (i. e., they may speak that way but would not write the same way). I believed that any changes to the first-person story should be a joint partnership of the storyteller and myself with final approval of the text by the participants since it was their stories. A record of the story changes or a paper trail was maintained throughout the

research which provides a record of the approval of use of the stories by the participants.

Interpretation of the Stories

Although the stories are the central focus of the study, after reading the stories about the administrators, the reader may attempt an interpretation of the stories. Sandelowski (1991) states that "narrative analyses of texts force scholars to attend first to what is placed immediately before them--stories--before transforming them into descriptions and theories of the lives they represent" (p.162). Although the stories are the main focus of the study, my task is to provide for the reader my interpretation of the stories, organized by themes and categories (Van Manen, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988; Riessman, 1993; Grove, 1981).

Because an unstructured interview was used with the participants in order to give them the opportunity to tell their stories, categories emerged from the stories through an intuitive process, based on what was stated and my understanding of what was said. Category titles were derived from the many readings of the stories. Grove (1981, p. 275) indicates that a researcher will be dependent on his/her intuition to develop categories from the data gathered.

Interpretation of the stories provides the reader with a further opportunity to link the stories with the realities of lived experiences of administrators in similar positions, be they nursing education program administrators or other types of administrators. Riessman (1993) states that "In a very real sense meaning is collaboratively accomplished, involving teller, listener/analyst, and reader" (p.42). My interpretation method adapts some of Riessman's (1993) narrative analysis process but

her method does not address the interpretation of first- person stories and she states "Considerable adaptation and/or other methods will be required if data consist of written narratives, such as letters, archival oral histories, autobiographies, researcher's accounts, scientific representations, and theory itself" (p. 69). Ricoeur (cited in Astrom, Norberg, Hallberg, 1993, pp. 185-186) recommends interpretation of a narrative using three steps. Here, the first step is a general reading of all the nine stories, to gain an overview of the participants' explanations and reasons for leaving positions. The next step recommended by Ricoeur is to carry out a structural analysis (interpretation), in order to identify parts and patterns within the nine stories that point to common reasons for leaving a position and how the participants handled the leaving process. In this way I identified numerous explanations or reasons that could be categorized. Once this was completed I reviewed the nine stories again, taking into account the first general reading and the categories that had been created. From these readings and reflections themes which illuminated patterns in the stories were identified. Ricoeur refers to this step as the "interpreted whole" stage and it provides a sense of conclusion to the interpretation.

Categories and themes refer to patterns in the data with categories being a first level of abstraction and the latter being a higher level of abstraction.

Assuring Quality in a Narrative Study

A first-person explanatory narrative study must pursue a form of truth or quality (Bailey, 1996, p. 187). The pursuit of truth or quality is relevant to an explanatory narrative inquiry because the reader expects

the stories to be relevant to their own lives. Sandelowski (1991, citing Brody, 1987; Spence,1982) states that

> Narrative truth is distinguished from other kinds of formal science truths by its emphasis on life-like, intelligible and plausible story. Stories typically reflect a coherence (as opposed to correspondence) theory of truth in that the narrator strives for narrative probability--a story that makes sense; narrative fidelity--a story consistent with past experiences or other stories; and aesthetic finality--a story with satisfactory closure and representational appeal. (pp. 164-165)

Similarly, the presence of consistent information within the categories and themes in the interpretation enhances quality. Agar and Hobbs (1982, cited in Riessman, 1993, p. 67) call this themal coherence in which "chunks" of the interview text "figure importantly and repeatedly" in the interpretation. Therefore, having consistent stated examples using participants' words to illustrate a category enhances narrative quality. Gee (1985, cited in Mishler, 1990, p. 431) also indicates that the technique of having the interpretation "tied directly to the data", as in the presence of quotes from the stories, enhances trustworthiness or quality.

Another perspective on research quality is from Riessman (1993) who believes that truth is not pursued but rather trustworthiness. Riessman (1993) states that

> Validation, the process through which we make claims for the trustworthiness of our interpretations, is the critical issue. "Trustworthiness" not "truth" is a key semantic difference. The latter assumes an objective reality, whereas the former moves the process into the social world. (p. 65)

Similarly, Polkinghorne (1988) states that a researcher "aims for

verisimilitude, or results that have the appearance of truth or reality" (p.176). Polkinghorne (1988) concludes that "narrative research, then, uses the ideal of a scholarly consensus as the test of verisimilitude rather than the test of logical or mathematical validity" (p. 176).

Rudestam and Newton (1992) state that "reliability concerns the replication of the study under similar circumstances. The naturalistic investigator derives consistency through coding the raw data in ways so that another person could understand the themes and arrive at similar conclusions" (p. 38). Polkinghorne (1988) states that "reliability in narrative study usually refers to the dependability of the data and validity to the strength of the analysis of the data" (p. 176). Polkinghorne concludes that the researcher has to "establish a free flow of information from participants [in the study] and to describe fully how it was accomplished" (p. 177). He states that "narrative studies do not have formal proofs of reliability, relying instead on the details of their procedures to evoke an acceptance of the trustworthiness of the data" (p. 177).

By providing each participant of the study with a copy of both her interview transcript and the first-person story adapted from it, I have enhanced narrative quality. Participants were asked to review the transcripts and the adapted first-person stories to verify contents. This process was adapted from that which Riessman (1993) called correspondence. Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to member checks, which I have interpreted to mean sending back the adapted first-person story and interview transcript for review and any additions or deletions that the participant wishes to make to render the first-person story more

plausible and, in some cases, more grammatically correct.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that " As the study unfolds and particular pieces of information come to light, steps should be taken to validate each against at least one other source (for example, a second interview)" (p. 283). By having the participants review the interview text that I have gathered and adapted into a first-person story, and with their additions, adjustments, or deletions a type of story triangulation occurs. Two perspectives are given to the story one by the participant and one by me. Once initial contact is made with the participant, further contacts can be made, which according to Huberman and Miles (1994, cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p. 438) enhances triangulation. They state "feedback from informants can be used at any point in the cycle" to enhance triangulation (p.438).

My task then is to present (in cooperation with the participants) quality plausible first-person stories and then to present a plausible, quality interpretation of those stories. In the interpretation chapter, to enhance plausibility (Riessman, 1993) and narrative quality (Bailey, 1996) I have supported my interpretations with first-person accounts from the participants that illustrate the categories and consequently connect the categories to the themes.

In conclusion, the researcher carrying out first-person stories is dependent on the participant to tell the truth. No matter how many times one interviews or allows the participant the opportunity to write into their story, not all the possible information will be added to the story, since the participants will always want to hold back certain secrets about memorable moments they have lived. This activity does not deny the

truthfulness of the story. Participants will inevitably have experiences that they will want to keep to keep to themselves and no researcher using any method is going to cause these secrets to be released by the participant--a certain amount of mystery about their lived lives will remain within themselves.

Ethical Considerations

Addresses of potential participants were requested from the provincial nursing association, or letters soliciting participation were sent directly to potential participants whose addresses I knew. The participants were sent letters requesting their participation. The letters explained how confidentiality would be ensured and spelled out the rules and regulations concerning the interview and research project, which would follow university ethics committee rules and regulations. Time commitment, purpose of the study, and any benefits from participation were also explained. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time and that any part of their first-person story could be deleted on request before the first-person story was added to the dissertation. Consent to participate forms were filled out to indicate that the stories would be used in the dissertation and the participants were informed on the first page of the adapted first-person story that they would have last say on the content of the story. The participants were informed that another person transcribed the tapes, and the transcriber of the interview tapes was expected to maintain confidentiality. An editor, employed to review the stories and the dissertation for grammar, was also expected to maintain confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE NINE STORIES

Introduction to the Nine Stories

The purpose of the following chapter is to provide the reader with an opportunity to read stories about nine nursing education program administrators. The stories are in a first-person, autobiographical format as each individual explained her lived life as she choose to tell it to me (Riessman, 1993, p. 2, and Bailey, p. 192). Consequently, the participants are allowed to hold the reader's attention for a lengthy time and allow the reader the opportunity to interpret the story context as the reader sees fit. This means the reader is not influenced by the researcher's choice to use only bits and pieces of the participant's story (Riessman, 1993, p. 3) while telling a third-person story. The participant's choice of words to tell her story makes the career and the explanations of why she moved on vivid and real. The storytelling also gives the reader an opportunity to get to know the speaker and her career as well as the explanations as to why she moved on and how she handled the leaving from the nursing education program administrator's position (Riessman, 1993, p. 11).

The reader should be allowed the privilege of determining the relevance of the stories to his or her own life and to interpret the nine stories without my interpretation, so the stories here are placed before the interpretation. The date under each name is the date the first-person story was approved by the participant for insertion into the study. Changes were made after that only to preserve the anonymity of the participant.

In the era that provided the context for the stories, various events were taking place that allowed the participants to move on to other positions. Nursing was undergoing rapid changes which included growth in the need for more registered nurses, hence growth in nursing programs. The location of programs started to change from hospital locations to community colleges. The population of the provinces and the country had grown quickly as had the number of hospitals to meet the needs of patients. This growth provided job opportunities for the participants and allowed for the need for further education to be fulfilled. Curricula for nursing education programs locations were changing, and the need for instructors to pursue graduate education increased correspondingly.

The Story of Louise

1996 02 23

I think possibly I will start with the point at which I left high school. At that stage in my life I really thought I wanted to be a teacher, and I thought I wanted to teach mathematics, would you believe it? My best friend was going into nursing. She thought it would be great if we went together. I said, "Never do I want to be a nurse, thank you very much". I had done part-time work in a store during high school, so after graduation I went into full-time. Very soon I was moved into the office as bookkeeper, then one of the partners in the business retired and I took over management of that unit. I mentioned this because when I look back I see a clue that some of my abilities lay in administration. I didn't see myself staying in retail for the rest of my life so I became restless. I wanted to do something that had more purpose in it than making money. Those were the very difficult depression years. The reason I didn't go into teaching initially was because we couldn't afford to send me to university. That was still the days of hospital schools, so although I had declared myself never to be interested in nursing, I became interested in a pragmatic sort of sense and went into a hospital program. I found I really did enjoy nursing, but the thing I liked best about it was the teaching aspects--which is not too surprising.

So after I finished the three-year program I worked for a year on an obstetrics unit, where of course you are teaching all the time. I soon found myself drawn towards public health nursing, again thinking that there was so much maternal-child work in public health nursing and teaching in those areas which I had totally enjoyed on Obstetrics. A year

later I went to university to do a certificate in public health nursing and eventually went back to complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN). When I completed the baccalaureate degree there was an opportunity available to teach the community nursing aspect and I moved into that position at the university.

While I was doing public health nursing, I began prenatal classes in several communities in my district. I particularly enjoyed the maternal-child programs we offered. The maternal-child nursing consultant was a wonderful mentor during those years. She led me into exploration of concepts and ideas that I found really exciting. That was the first experience that I had in working in a developmental environment. Hospitals did not provide that in my experience. The bureaucracy was more oppressive there, but in public health nursing the whole environment was "let's make sure that everyone can develop to their optimum".

New health regions were being formed at that time. The nursing supervisor from one of the existing regions was moved to help develop a new region--thus leaving a vacancy. The director of public health nursing called me and asked me if I would take the vacant Public Health Nurse 3 position in that region. I wasn't sure that I wanted that level of administration so quickly since I hadn't done anything beyond the first level of practice. I was also aware that there were some problems in the administration there, but both the director of maternal-child services and the maternal-child nursing consultant encouraged me to go, so I did. The consultant continued to encourage and mentor me while I was there.

I spent a year there and decided that administration was not "my

bag" although in fact things had gone quite well. I went back into a staff position in public health nursing in another province and later went back to school, fully expecting to return to district nursing. However, I took the job offered to me at the university to teach community nursing at the undergraduate level and was quite content there. I began plans to start a graduate program and continue at the university, but my life took a bit of a twist. I got married and had babies! I resigned from the university before the babies were born.

When the children began first grade, I was offered a position at another institution as one of the coordinators in the nursing program. Since the children were more independent I accepted, and spent four years there. Some things about that program were not a good fit for me and I tended to think it was the administrative aspect that wasn't the fit. It was an enormous bureaucracy. I had to be a member of the union to work there, and we had two "wild-cat" strikes while I was there. In the second, I was strong-willed enough to cross the picket lines because there was work to be done to get ready for students who were coming in the fall. I had 200 students coming in under my coordination. I didn't feel it was appropriate to be walking the picket line for a non-nursing issue that I didn't believe was as important as the program when I had students coming, so I continued to work. There were people being assaulted when they went to work, so our family knew that when I went out of the door anything could happen. I was parking at a distance from the institute in order to avoid having tires slashed and that sort of thing. That fall I gave notice that I would be leaving at the end of the school year. My family was very supportive as I explored alternative options. The children

were only ten years of age but were very much involved in the decision to move to another province at the end of that year.

Again I looked for a place to teach. I have this pattern of moving laterally or downward and recouping--it is almost a looping kind of pattern. It was at that point I became interested in a particular nursing program in another province for a couple of reasons. I was really interested in what was happening at that program when they were looking at the educational standard for nursing, and I knew that institution was doing some innovative things with its nursing program. They were expanding their program at that point, so that provided job opportunity, and happily I was accepted. When I was interviewed for that teaching position, the dean asked if I was interested in moving into administration and I declared vehemently, "Never!". I had been given two rounds at this and I left each of them saying administration is not "my bag" and I want to settle into teaching and stay there. I felt quite sure that that was what I intended to do.

After I had been there for about two years, the program [director] was going on educational leave. I was asked to be the acting [director] for the year that she was away and I declined. I was thoroughly enjoying my teaching assignments. Two more changes occurred in the [director] position and each time I declined the suggestion that I apply. My response was twofold: I believed anyone in that position should have at least a master's degree, which I did not have, and I was convinced that administration was not for me.

Meanwhile I was concerned that students in our area had little opportunity to study in a degree program in nursing. I got interested in

the possibility of a project that would enhance the potential for students to complete a nursing degree at our institution. An outreach program was being offered for students in a master's program with a project in lieu of a thesis. I was accepted into the program and supported by the institution to have the time of the blocks of classes free of teaching responsibilities. We had a family council to discuss the ramifications at home for me to be a student. I didn't know if I should be doing this at my age when I still had responsibility at home but both my husband and the children encouraged me to enrol. The children offered to take turns with meals, etc. and they did. When I had papers to do they would make sure that I had time to do them. They would read them and critique them and we would study together because they were still in high school. We just had a lot of fun. I thoroughly enjoyed that part and was able to complete the program in two school years plus summer sessions and still carry full time workload. The project I completed was a feasibility study of students to complete a baccalaureate degree in nursing at the institution.

I had just finished the master's program when there was a rather abrupt change in the [nursing program administrator] at the college. The dean approached me saying that there was a need for someone to fill in immediately and asked if I would do it. I assured her that I was not really interested and she responded that she knew that but the reason that I had given her two years previous was that I didn't have the qualifications, and now I could not say that. She came back a few days later, having polled the faculty to find out who they would like to take the interim position and she showed me the results. A high ratio of the faculty had asked for me to take the interim position. She had given me such good

support and encouragement over the previous years that I agreed to take it on an interim basis. So that was the beginning of that administrative position.

As soon as I moved into the position the opportunity became available to implement the feasibility study that I had done and that was so exciting to me. I would have been a fool not to take the chance to implement the collaborative degree program. From there on it was a joyride. There was so much excitement and fun and stimulation about seeing something happen that I totally believed in and was committed to. The first years of trying to untangle the bureaucratic nightmare in order to move something that different into the system kept us all busy. The faculty worked hard to make it a program we all owned. Once we got the program rolling I could see that my role was in the initiation phase and other people could see it to completion

I was by now at retirement age. My husband had long since retired and was not in good health. He needed a second round of surgery so that was a major factor that made me realize that if I was going to have some time in retirement to spend with him, I should start it fairly soon. We had some very capable faculty and I felt quite comfortable that the direction that we were headed in the program would continue to move quite clearly and smoothly. I had several of them express their concern about what would happen when I left because I had a lot of influence in getting that program rolling. But because everybody else had been so involved in it too, I was able to honestly reassure them that I didn't think it would make any change in the program. They in fact owned the program--not I. No one attempted to change my mind and I think it

was in part because they were very well aware of the situation at home and shared my concern that it was important for me to have some time there at this point. I talked to the dean and indicated my personal reason for feeling that I should leave the next year. I also talked with the academic vice-president (who had been the dean who hired me). I talked with him about the potential of people coming in to take over and the process that should be used for replacement. Very early that fall I wrote my formal letter of resignation to the president. When the faculty met in September I told them of my decision because I felt it was crucial that they know well in advance and be prepared. We had worked so closely together. Many of the faculty had been hired while I was the [director], and others I had taught with, so I felt it was the best collegial thing to do. The academic vice-president talked to the faculty about how they wished to see the process happen for replacing me, so it was really on the table all through the last year I was there.

It was spring when the decision was made about who would take over the leadership so I couldn't turn over the responsibility to a specific body, but there many many times in meetings when there would be reference made by me or by someone else about how things would happen. Change of the leadership was openly discussed throughout that whole year. The other thing I should mention is that about May of the year I was leaving, there was need for a half-time administrator to work in the new collaborative program for the university. I agreed to do that. It was a bridge because although I was going into a different job as a half-time person for the university, I remained at the institution in a different office. This made me available to the people replacing if they needed

information that I had forgotten to pass on.

Before I left the program I spent several hours with the new program administrator, going through issues that I thought she might have to deal with and filling her in with information that I thought might be helpful in terms of things that had already been processed. That helped with closure because having shared [about the program that is], "this is what I have done, here is the whole piece and now it is yours". I had strong emotions about leaving. It was probably the time I was packing out--going through the book shelves, going through the files, and thinking, this is a whole piece of my life that has come to closure. It was a bit like closing a chapter. I looked forward in many ways to the release of responsibility but part of the comfort was knowing that I still had a finger-tip touch with it. I didn't feel as though I was cutting my bridges right away. When I left at the end of the transition year with the university, I knew the person who was replacing me in that position and I had taken much less professional material into that office (very much less). Most of it I passed over to my successor there. When I walked out of the institution I felt as though this was a piece of my life that was behind me. But the interesting thing is that when I would walk back into the institution it was as though I had never left. My whole association with that place was such a happy one.

When I look back at my career I know it was not my plan to move into administration. However, the reason I began this account of my experiences with my graduation from high school is that there is definitely a pattern that began even then. I was only nineteen when I began managing a large section of a department store, doing the buying,

etc. for ladies' wear, children's wear, shoes, and fabrics. There was certainly some evidence that I could take responsibility, although I was not so much responsible for other people. When I moved into a teaching role I was responsible for other people in terms of their growth and development, and I have always enjoyed those opportunities. It was in the third move into administration that I really found my stride and I am so thankful for that opportunity that was given me.

Retirement for me was a concluding episode of a very happy relationship. I have many times said that the environment where I last worked is so constructive that people who have not worked in many places have minimal appreciation of the opportunities that there are there. It was just a totally great experience. Now having said that, don't let me make it sound so "Polyannish" that there were never any days that were difficult. There were lots of days that were difficult, and lots of issues that were unpleasant. That's part of living.

So that's a brief, thumbnail sketch of my experience in administration. I never regretted having taken that third administrative position. It was just the nicest possible way for me to finish my professional career and it gave me such a lot of satisfaction and fulfilment. It's been a good experience.

The Story of Sarah

1996 02 08

Well, my career path really began when I was in about grade eleven and I began to think about what I was going to do with my life. The likelihood of my being able to do anything major in the small town in which I was born and raised was rather remote and I began to look for support, financial support to start a career. I was from a large family, father a labourer--what could I do to get myself launched. It was obvious to me that I did not want to stay home like a lot of my schoolmates were doing. I thought without money what would be the cheapest way to get an education and get out of my hometown--nursing. Nursing programs would provide me with a place to live, a stipend, and uniforms. All I would need to do was give them my services. Nursing afforded an opportunity for me to go with friends that were in my class in grade twelve and also to get as far away from home as I possibly could to determine whether or not I was able to live on my own.

I went in to a three-year nursing program and as a result of my experiences there I became very disillusioned with nursing, particularly where nursing students provided a lot of the service in the hospital, and I promised myself when I finished my three-year program, that I would never work in a hospital where nursing students were learning to nurse.

Following that I said to myself that I would like to make a difference. I would like to change the education system for nursing students and decided that I would go to university and take a diploma in nursing education and then teach. I thought that if I had a diploma in nursing education I would at least have the basis for doing something

about the exploitation of nursing students as they got their education. Following that I decided I needed to know more about nursing and nursing education and took a nursing degree, which required one further year following my diploma in nursing education from the university.

I taught for a couple of years at the university and recognized once again that I was lacking. I didn't have a global perspective on health and I sensed that my nursing students in the university had more awareness of the world than I did and I decided that I would leave nursing education in Canada that I would go to another country--a Third World country. While in the Third World I learned a great deal about different aspects of nursing. I became once again aware of my lack of knowledge about nursing and felt that I should further my education by taking a master's degree. I lacked research skills and wanted to be sure that I could meet any employment opportunities that crossed my path in the future. I completed the program and was hired to teach in a master's program. It was during this period of teaching in the master's program that I was asked if I would consider a nursing administration job. I had never been a manager in the formal sense of the word and certainly I had never ever considered myself able or even interested in being a director or administrator of a nursing education program. I had no aspiration to move into administration.

When I finished my master's degree and began to teach in an innovative program at that particular university, and I thought I was going to be there for the rest of my life. It was the boss that I had in the Third World who contacted me and said there is a need for someone to come and work with the program and he said "I have recommended that the

administration seek you out for that position." However the more I thought of it, and the more I was badgered by my old friend, it perhaps crossed my mind that perhaps it was an opportunity for me to develop further some of the potential that I didn't know I had. It was quite interesting because I just laughed when this former boss of mine approached me and then when the vice-president academic called me and also invited me to come out and at least look at the position, I laughed. I just could not envision myself in an administrative role and I had no interest in it. I guess one of the things that caused me to think more deeply about the possibilities of moving into administration was when my former boss said to me--he knowing my background said to me, "Have you prayed about this?" This sort of took me off guard. I never expected that kind of question to come from my past boss and so I thought maybe I should.

So I began to talk about the job opportunity to confidants; people that I trusted like my mother, my oldest brother, individuals I felt had some worldly wisdom and could help me with this decision. I also decided that maybe I should risk-take a little and I made the decision. Following that decision I did not take the position for a year, that was part of the contract because I felt obligated to the institution that hired me and I had only been there for one year. I felt I needed to give them at least two years so I stayed the additional year and while there I made trips to another province to visit directors of nursing of education programs like the one that I would be taking over. I found that very, very valuable. One individual in particular has been a mentor to this day so that's how I arrived at that administrative position. So after a lot of thought, I decided

that I would try such an adventure. So I thought to myself, all right let's go to the [program] and I did and I became involved in managing a nursing education program for about ten years.

It was in 1985 that I became due for a sabbatical and thought to myself will I take a sabbatical? If I do take a sabbatical what will I do? I thought it might be interesting to do something in further education outside of nursing. I considered another master's degree but this time in psychology because I enjoy the study of human behaviour. Again, I was influenced by my employer and by my mother who said "That is not what you ought to be doing--you are a nurse and you have a great deal of potential to provide leadership in nursing and therefore you need to reconsider doing another master's degree and particularly in another field than nursing". It was at that point I thought I would consider a doctoral degree. I knew that if I didn't take a doctoral degree that my options would be limited. If I wanted to move into a another administrative position, particularly at a university or if I wanted to teach in a university, I knew I would need to have the doctoral degree. I have always been interested in the direct patient care and in choosing my degree program, my doctoral program, that part was very attractive to me and it did make me feel once again that I would have more options if I did something in a clinical area along with the research. I didn't take any administrative theory at all. It was a clinical-based and research-focused program.

Having taken the doctoral degree and moving back into my administrative position I felt that it would be very difficult to keep alive the knowledge and the skill that I learned at the doctoral level, and that if I

stayed too long in my old administrative position I would have to remain in that role for the rest of my career because I would lose--if you don't use it you lose it, and I didn't feel that I was ready to close my career in an administrative position.

I then returned to the nursing program to pay back the sabbatical leave that I had and began to think once again what is my future? How many more years of work do I really have? I began to think about my long-term goals. I had always enjoyed working with nursing students. That was one of the reasons that I had taken the diploma in nursing education in the first place--to change the nursing education system and I began to think that maybe after fourteen years or so of nursing administration I would end my career in a teaching role and that role I am currently in and there is the possibility that I will end my career in the next few years. It was always in the back of my mind from the first year that I returned to the nursing program but I didn't talk about it that much until a relative that lived with me became ill and once I realized that the illness would probably end in death, I began to actively permit myself to be pursued by other institutions for teaching roles.

I felt that I had come to the program when the program was struggling and now it was strong and this was the best time to leave. So I realized that, although I would be leaving a lot of good friends and familiar places and so on and so forth, I wanted more and I wanted more challenge. It was more happy then it was sad. I felt that I was leaving on a high. I had achieved my objectives. It was time to move on.

My major concern was to leave the administrative situation in the most capable hands that I could find. To let the staff be the first to know --

the possibility that I would be leaving and to support them while I was there. To help them to understand that it had nothing to do with them. That they had been extremely supportive and together we had developed a very strong nursing education program--nothing to be ashamed of and that the individual that would come in would have the opportunity to build on what we had begun. I had nothing to do with the hiring process at all. I was outside of the parameters of hiring and which I believe is right. I was leaving the situation and the faculty--they needed to be the ones that would be involved in determining who would come. I did not work with the person before I left but I knew the person that was hired and I had worked with the person at another point in my career.

I handed in my keys and I thought well I am turning my back on the past. I can never go back and there were twinges of are you sure you are making the right decision? what if you don't succeed in your next role?, but I felt I had come too far in my thinking and my plans to do anything other than to close that chapter of my life and to move on.

I remember the last moment and it seems as though the biggest problem was getting everything packed up, and the desk emptied, and the keys turned in, and the last goodbyes, and all of that. It was late in the evening after everyone had gone home that I finally concluded everything and left the place.

When I look back and think about the last few months I guess I was just very exhausted, very exhausted. There had been a death of a family member; there had been choices to be made in terms of which position I would accept. It had not been easy to make the choice, and there was a lot of work in selling the house, moving and so on, so I guess I was more

tired than anything else but I felt that I had concluded everything the way I had wanted to conclude it and from that standpoint it was with good satisfaction.

I think I have covered everything. It is very interesting. I look back on my career record and really there are very few positions that I ever applied for. I tended to move on invitations to come and therefore others have had a lot to do with my growth and development and my different milestones in my career. If I hadn't had that kind of support maybe I wouldn't have had all of the career experiences that I have but I had a lot of excellent mentors. People who were interested in seeing me move to the outer limits of possibility as far as my potential is concerned. It has been a very exciting career path for me.

The Story of Mary

1996 02 27

I always wanted to be a nurse, as far back as my preschool days I am told. I don't ever remember wanting to be anything else so that was firmly entrenched in my mind by the time I reached junior high school and certainly into high school. I governed my studies accordingly.

At the wish of my father I spent two years working after high school before I entered a nursing program. The purpose of this hiatus was to earn some money but also to gain experience interacting in the business world. This experience was most helpful to me when I did finally enrol in a hospital-based, three-year nursing program.

Upon graduation I was offered a position in a hospital as assistant head nurse on the pediatric unit. I do not know why I was approached for that position other than that there was an opening and nursing administration was offering available positions to graduates from my class. I accepted the position and thus was launched on my nursing career.

In accepting the assistant head nurse position I sidestepped, unwisely no doubt, the very valuable hands-on bedside nursing which most beginning nurses experience. I did do a short stint of bedside nursing later but I commenced my career in a first-level administrative position. I remained in that position for two years and enjoyed it immensely. I discovered during those two years that I enjoyed nursing children and that became my clinical focus for the entire years of my career.

At the end of the second year I decided that I would like to move

into teaching pediatric nursing. I cannot for certain tell you why I thought I would find that interesting except that I found myself always wanting to explain the "how" and the "why" of our nursing actions to the students, staff, and parents. I was encouraged to follow that path by the clinical instructor on the unit. We became good friends, she was an excellent teacher, and perhaps it was seeing her in that role, and observing her deep sense of satisfaction that motivated me.

I believe the motivation to pursue studies in preparation for teaching went beyond any outside influence. I knew I would not be able to return to the institution in which I was presently working because my friend was safely ensconced there and showed no signs of making a change. That fact did not deter me.

I was granted a leave of absence and went off to university to take a one-year certificate course in teaching and supervision, all of which was most enjoyable. I completed it successfully and, much to my surprise, was able to return to the same institution and unit where I had been assistant head nurse. While I was away, my friend had decided to go to university herself to complete her baccalaureate degree, leaving the teaching position available to me.

I did classroom and clinical teaching in pediatric nursing for the next two years. Much time was spent in the clinical setting, which I loved. At the end of those two years I needed a change from the present work situation in which I had been for eight years. That, as well as personal reasons, led me to enrol in a liberal arts college in the States for a year of general studies. The courses in which I enrolled were non-nursing in the fields of psychology, sociology, fine arts, communications, and religion.

Each course was extremely interesting and very valuable. I had a brother studying in the same city at that time, giving me a wonderful opportunity to be exposed to one of the largest cities on the North American continent with him as my guide.

I returned home at the end of that school year not knowing what I was going to do. Not for long however, for three or four days after my return I received a call from the director of nursing from another large city hospital with a school of nursing saying that she had heard of my return and would I come to have "tea" with her one afternoon. Very little detail was given as to the reason for the invitation other than it would relate to some personal needs at "her" institution. I was hesitant to accept as I was uncertain as to whether I was going to stay in the city or if, in fact, I was going to stay in nursing. She pressed me to come anyway and so I accepted.

After lengthy discussion I was offered a position on the infant, (0-2 years) pediatric unit. The position combined the head nurse and clinical instructor roles on the twenty-seven bed unit. I carried the dual roles for two years and found it very stressful. It was difficult to be responsible for the nursing care of the patients while at the same time be responsible for the education of the students. I constantly struggled with the conflict of scheduling the students' assignments to meet the needs of the patients while trying to remain true to meeting the learning needs of the students.

At the end of the second year I spoke to the director of nursing explaining the internal conflict and that I didn't feel I was doing justice to either area of responsibility. My concerns were heard; commencing the third year of my employment, I assumed a full-time teaching position

(classroom and clinical teaching) for the 0-2 years component of the pediatric nursing course.

I was given the option of assuming the head nurse of the infant pediatric unit but teaching had become my first love and I happily chose the instructor position. An added incentive was that the instructor with whom I would be working was my friend who had first encouraged me to pursue a teaching role. After completing her baccalaureate degree, she too was lured to the "other" institution and was now the Instructor on the 3-16 years pediatric unit.

So, for another two years I remained as the classroom and clinical Instructor on the infant pediatric unit. During the spring months of my third year of employment, I was released to study for twelve weeks at a well-known university on the east coast in the speciality areas of child psychology/child development. Another excellent experience. A motivating and revitalizing break during during a stressful four years.

It was time for me to press on with further formal education leading to a baccalaureate degree in nursing. For all the bits and pieces of studying I had done, I had not yet completed the requirements for a basic degree in nursing. Times were changing and, since I had become comfortable in the world of nursing education, I knew I must, as soon as possible, become academically qualified to stay in that field.

With the credits received from all the "bits and pieces" of previous study I was able to enter the university faculty of nursing with the required number of nursing credits. I could therefore complete the degree in one year but it would be a difficult one. My program consisted of nothing but upper-level, fourth-year, non-nursing courses. I found myself competing

with students majoring in the fields of English, sociology, psychology, zoology, children's drama, etc., etc. It was a challenging year to say the least.

I completed the year of study in a state of minor exhaustion. I was, however, pleased to learn that I had achieved a GPA of over 3.5 which was the average required to enter graduate school and the master of nursing program. I had no intention of pursuing a master's degree when I left my job and neither did I have the funds to undertake another year or more of study.

I shared my situation with a friend who encouraged me to apply to the graduate school and further opened the door by recommending me for a dorm nurse job in one of the women's dormitories. I applied to the School of Graduate Studies for entry into the master of science in nursing program and at the same time applied for the dorm nurse job which would pay my room and board and give me a small stipend besides. With this income and what I had from my own savings, I was able to finance one more year of study. With lots of "sweat and tears", I was able to complete the program in one year. It was rewarding, challenging, and very difficult! I am grateful for the opportunity.

As I was completing the baccalaureate year of studies, I was contacted by a [nursing program] in my home town. This institution was still under construction and would not open for two more years. Their [nursing program] was to open in a few months and the search was on for instructors for the second year. A teaching position in their school was discussed with me, followed by the offer of the pediatric instructor position. As soon as possible, I returned home for an interview (which

went well) and I accepted the position.

This position was not available for another eighteen months--further confirmation that I should embark on studies toward a master's degree. About six months into master's studies I received an urgent telephone call from the director of nursing stating that plans had changed! The nursing coordinator of the obstetrical department had resigned and would I consider accepting that position instead of the pediatric nursing instructor position? This would mean a move from the area of education to nursing service, from familiar territory which I had been working in for some years and for which I had taken additional education to be better prepared. I had to give very careful thought to this proposal. I felt competent in the clinical area of pediatric nursing; I did not feel comfortable with the idea of moving into obstetrical nursing, for I had had no experience in that specialty since my student days.

After much deliberation, to make a long story short, I did accept that offer and quickly made some adjustments in my master's studies to incorporate exposure to that new speciality. The topic of my thesis overlapped because it encompassed the broader field of maternal and child care. I accepted the position--with considerable fear, I might add! I was going to a new institution, to a new clinical speciality with a much expanded role of responsibility. I was nervous!

It turned out to be one of the best decisions I had ever made. It stretched me in many different ways, in the most ideal environment. The organization was small and everyone who was employed, from the administration to the service staff and all in between, were extremely committed people with a single goal: to launch a first-rate health care

facility as quickly as possible. These circumstances caused us to bond together, to support one another in a way which I had not experienced before.

The position was challenging and very satisfying. The nursing staff who had joined me to open the obstetrical department were committed to mounting a Family-Centred Maternity Care Program (FCMCP), a new concept in Canada but fairly common in the American obstetrical care centres. It would take at least five years to open the four units and see the FCMCP implemented and running smoothly. I loved the challenge of starting something new and felt confident that I had made the right choice when I accepted the coordinator position.

Consequently, I was very surprised when, at the end of the second year as nursing coordinator, I was asked to consider a move to the [nursing program] to become its [director]. In such a short time, I was faced with another decision. I did not expect this. I did not feel prepared for such responsibility. I was just getting used to the world of patients and meeting their needs and I was quite enjoying it. I felt that, after two years of tremendously hard work on the part of everyone in the department, things were falling into place. Was I really ready for another major upheaval in my career? My initial reaction was to decline.

As I deliberated, I asked myself why I had chosen nursing education administration as my major area of study in my master's program if I did not intend to work in that field. Of course I intended to use it, but at a lower level, as an instructor or as a level coordinator in a university program. After a time of turmoil, I accepted the offer. So, after two years of overseeing the operation of the obstetrical department, I

transferred to the [nursing program] and remained there as program [director] until retirement day.

Several of the positions I held were preceded by time in a formal education program. Each segment of education undertaken was extremely valuable in preparing me for the next phase of my career. In each instance, I made the decision on my own. None of my supervisors initiated the idea that I should leave my position to seek more education. I wish they had. I believe I would have accomplished more earlier in my career if I had had the educational background. I am grateful, however, that each of them was supportive when I told them of my intent to pursue further studies.

As I ponder the phases of my career, I am reminded that I didn't apply for one of the positions, not even the first one. Those opportunities did not come my way because of who or what I was. I was just the right person in the right place at the right time. I cherish the memory of each of those opportunities, that they came my way with little skill or effort on my part. I'm grateful that, although in most cases I was nervous to just plain scared, I did accept them. I have had a rich and rewarding career made possible by many who had the faith that with their help I would succeed.

I was [director] of the nursing program for a long time. They were wonderful years--every one of them. There were some difficult times--difficult for different reasons. Sometimes it was finances, sometimes political in nature. A stretch of personal illness presented its own challenge, faculty dissension occurred from time to time, as did union conflicts.

I always had a superb management team, even in the early years

when only two of us represented administration. The management team was increased to eight in [the early eighties] when the school enrolment was increased by fifty per cent and the nursing education programs were transferred to a government department. The position in the [program] was the highlight of my career. I am so grateful that the initial fears were overcome, that the entire team believed that together we could achieve our goal.

The decision to retire came after much thought. I could work another five years if I wished but for a number of reasons it seemed expedient to end my [directorship] of the [program] and indeed, my career in nursing. I have no regrets regarding the decision.

What was happening in nursing education in the province and the country as a whole was one reason. It was clear that a baccalaureate degree should be the requirement for entry to practice nursing in the province. Nurse educators in our region were deeply involved in planning for a collaborative nursing degree program. I was part of the planning team. The model indicated that all students applying to a nursing program in our city would study one curriculum but would attend lectures [at different] campuses and be taught by faculty from [the different institutions].

This was a new model, never before used in designing a nursing program. It was important to me that the plan succeed and I felt that my successor must have some lead time to understand and assume ownership of it herself/himself before it was actually implemented. I left my position in order to allow my replacement that privilege.

Difficulties we were having with the nurses' union also

encouraged my decision. Their demands for changes in a number of clauses were incompatible with the sound education philosophy to which we were committed. The contract was negotiated to meet the needs of staff nurses, whose work schedules are much different from those of teachers.

A service-oriented contract cannot serve professionals in an education setting. Several faculty members, as well as union leaders, would not accept that fact and became unreasonable. I had not seen that kind of behaviour within the ranks of nursing before and it shocked and disappointed me greatly. I was not prepared to make policy changes to the detriment of the program, especially at the demand of the union.

Further, I recognized that I should be planning another educational leave to complete doctoral studies. That level of preparation is essential in any post-secondary education program that prepares professional practitioners. An exception should not be made for me. At my stage in life, having had a long and meaningful career doing what I love most to do, I was not interested in pursuing further education.

Other factors related to difficulties within the personal lives of a number of extended family members. I will not give details except to say that two separate families needed help desperately and I felt I could be of some assistance if I were free from my professional duties. Were these the only reasons for leaving I would feel completely at peace with my decision.

It was my own decision to leave nursing. I remember speaking to my supervisor. "I think I need a change", and I explained the reasons as I have just outlined. "I have thought about it for quite a while and feel quite

satisfied that I should resign and enter the world of the retired". I asked "How much notice would you like" to which she responded "One year". I continued, "I have not discussed my plans with my family, this is my own decision and you are the first person I have told". I reinforced that I would be leaving nursing, not going to another position or another institution.

There was much discussion and many kind things were said about my leadership in the school. Much of my success, if I dare call it that, was due directly to the strong support I always received from my immediate superiors. I could not have asked for more. At the specified time my letter of resignation was on her desk. That same evening I gave a copy of the letter to my family. This was the first my siblings knew of my plans. They were surprised but grateful that I would now be free to assist the troubled members of our family.

Once I had submitted my letter of resignation to my superior I told my management team. I believe it was the afternoon of the same day. I asked them not to say anything until I had informed the faculty and they respected my wishes. I timed it carefully so that the various groups of staff would learn of my decision at the proper time in the proper order. The following day was our regularly scheduled faculty meeting, at which time the faculty and support staff were told.

No one forced me to leave; it was entirely my own decision. I left at the high point as far as the reputation of the [program] was concerned. The graduates of the [program] were extremely well received all across Canada and throughout the world. Many of them were hired sight unseen which, in spite of their competence, surprised me.

So, it was certainly not pressure from anyone, it was simply an

inner sense that it was time for me to go. That is why I left. It was a long time to be in one position. I felt that I gave to our program a sense of stability. We were able to implement some long-range plans without being interrupted by someone new coming in every few years who may or may not have like what was on the drawing board at the time. No doubt there are benefits to frequent changes in leadership; however, that was not the practice in our institution.

I cannot remember what I did the last day on the job, to be honest with you. The last week was hectic orientating my replacement. She was an excellent choice but unfortunately was available for only one week prior to my leaving. My nephews came with "the truck" which was always called into service when any of the family had things to move. I'm sure some of us went out for lunch but we did that so often that I don't remember too much. I don't believe it was terribly emotional.

I believe that last position I held was very unique. I had the distinct privilege of serving in an educational setting in a very unique institution where the leaders were given a lot of flexibility--a lot of freedom in running their departments. That was true while I was nursing coordinator of the obstetrical department. We were able to introduce a unique program which is still strong thirty years later.

I found the same freedom while directing the education program. When I began, the program was very, very young, less than three years old. There was much to do and the small team of instructors I worked very hard those first few years. It was set up as a traditional program, with the students being given everything free (uniforms, books, board, and room, etc.), the cost of which was recouped by their contribution to the

care of patients. The [program] had no control over the students' clinical practice assignments.

We began immediately to revise the program to one which would be more educationally sound, in which the [program] would have control over both the theory and practice components. It took several years and significant amounts of money, but our goals were reached, the result of which was an excellent nursing program.

I left with a very positive feeling between the staff and myself. I was always welcomed back and to this day continue to have lunch with a number of the faculty and management team. I left on good terms feeling that others sensed that a contribution had been made.

I suppose I should be truthful and say that there were mixed feelings as I walked away that sunny Friday afternoon. I had walked that path hundreds of times, I had worked there a long time, it was not easy to say goodbye. But, there were pressing needs within the family and I was eager to move toward helping where I could. There was a sense of relief as I realized I had left the [program] at its prime under the leadership of a very competent [director].

The Story of Laura

1995 01 25

I did not set out with extensive career plans. Actually, I think for me it has been a little more accidental. I did not at the beginning of my career feel that I was on a track at some point in time, taking on a role similar to what I have now. What I found was that opportunities along the line tended to fall in place for me and that in many cases those opportunities tended to be in leadership positions. I guess the reason that I kind of stayed along that track was success that I was currently having in those kinds of roles and so it has been very evolutionary.

Soon after I graduated from nursing (it was actually less than two years afterwards), while I was an operating room nurse, a role came up to be a head nurse in one of the operating theatres. Normally a person would have a lot more experience than that to be able to get one of those roles, but I think it was coincidental that I was successful in achieving the role and then was successful in carrying out the role for another couple of years. I have found these roles challenging for a certain period of time but once I have mastered what it takes to execute a role, I kind of lose interest in it. I find myself getting bored and perhaps actually not even doing as good a job because of that. It is just a phenomenon that I have noticed with the jobs that I have had.

There was another opportunity--the position of instructor for a particular clinical service--where I was probably under-prepared and under-experienced to assume but was given the role. Typically a person would require a BSc degree. I didn't have a B.Sc. but I had a post-graduate course and I was successful in assuming the role. I occupied

the role for a couple of years and then the same phenomenon occurred; I kind of lost interest in the role and needed to look for another challenge. That's the point at which I decided I needed to go to university if I was going to enhance my abilities to take on different roles and to keep myself enthused in what I was doing. I went to university for a couple of years, got a BSc, and I decided not to go back into something that I would be eligible to do like another teaching role. But I wasn't interested in doing that because I had already done that job, so I decided to proceed right on to a master's degree. I finished that within a couple of years and then I looked for another job. Once again I was successful in the first competition that was of interest to me. That again was a very challenging experience. I learned a lot in that role. It happened to be an administrative role, and I guess the reason I was interested in it was because it capitalized on my experience and my interest in nursing education.

I feel that while I had a full-time career I demonstrated the ability to work effectively with people who are very difficult to work with. I think it is primarily personal skills. There were comments coming back to me that people appreciated working with me, found me helpful, found me available and able to provide constructive answers, and I made them feel welcome. I think in many respects this has contributed to people being willing to place confidence in me and my abilities to do the job.

I entered nursing education. It was a very challenging experience because it opened the door to learning more about nursing from a theoretical perspective. The position involved the coordination of a major curriculum change. It was a very valuable learning experience for me

and it was a very successful project. In my assessment of the project it led me to the understanding that I really would enjoy pursing doctoral studies, but there was a little event that kind of caused me to take a little break in my career--I was pregnant with my child. I had made the commitment that I would stay at home until the child entered school. When I left that particular job, I was in a position to actually take on a number of independent activities, including writing, university teaching, tutoring, redesigning a course, and some administrative work in coordinating a course. Even though I was at home I was very professionally involved in a diversity of activities.

I certainly honed my writing capabilities during this time. My ability to express [myself] clearly on paper, so that other people could understand, is something that certainly developed during that period of time. Certainly the ability to consult in a particular organization, comprehend a lot of what was happening in that organization in a quick time, and then capture that on paper for other people's review have contributed to capabilities that I guess are viewed as being part of the package that I bring to a particular job.

I didn't enter the doctoral process until I had been home for four years. There came a point in time when I realized that I needed to be doing something more. All this involvement was keeping me busy enough, but the idea of taking a doctorate had been in the back of mind for several years and it was a optimum time to do it. Although my intent was to do the doctorate fairly slowly, when I got into it it just became a snowball and I did it really quickly, in fact [just] short of two years.

I found the doctorate program the most rewarding of any

educational experience that I have had. If you had asked me the value of my BSc program or my master's program, my response would have been that it was more of a socialization process than it was a learning experience. I actually found the BSc and the master's programs to be not very enjoyable. You were kind of proceeding down the educational itineraries of the professors that you were working with rather then being allowed to develop your own knowledge in areas of interest. In the doctorate program I had the feeling that it was faculty-related: you were really acknowledged for the information and the experience you brought into the program. The ideas that you presented were valued and it was a very extensive growing experience for me. But what I also committed to doing during that program was to be very focused. I had set out at the beginning to be extremely focused on what I wanted to accomplish and all my work really focused on achieving that goal. So if at any time in my life I seemed very goal-focused it was probably during that doctorate program. Having a doctorate certainly contributed to my ability to be in my present position. In fact I know it did.

I was not really intending on assuming a full-time role after completing my doctorate, but because I had valued the educational experience so highly, a thought starting emerging in my mind that I really had an obligation to use that preparation. I almost felt this onerous responsibility to the province for having enabled me to experience this education. The thought of sitting at home and not doing much with it just didn't seem right, so as the doctorate program was kind of winding down and I was getting my thesis all organized, the opportunity arose with a particular nursing program. It happened that they were recruiting for a

program administrator. At first I was very divided and it was going to cause a big dilemma in my family for me to go back to work at that point in time, but in the end I did decide to indicate an interest in the position. Interestingly enough, they were apparently having difficulty recruiting into the position and my understanding was they were having difficulty finding someone they felt would fit the organization. In fact they were looking for someone with doctoral preparation. So, by having those criteria imposed upon the position, there really were very few people at the time that were presenting themselves first of all with the experience and second of all with the level of preparation. The timing was such that I was going to have a doctorate by the time I was on board.

When I read the job ad and how they described the person that they were looking for, my thought was that's exactly what I can offer them. When we got into the interview session they were looking for a person with demonstrated interpersonal skills, experience in administration, experience in education, and credibility in nursing. Due to my past experience and the opportunities that I have had, these were things that I could bring to the position. I had a recent publication which was impressive, a recent doctorate which was impressive, and a recent dissertation that focused on nursing education curriculum which was impressive. I was asked in the interview, "Why do you think you're eligible for the job?" and I can remember one member of the interview panel saying, "Well, we obviously haven't described the job thoroughly enough then if you are able to comply with all these criteria". I thought, that is kind of a derogatory statement to make because he was almost saying that there must be something else that we missed because to

have a candidate that so apparently filled all the requirements of the job didn't seem possible to them at the time. It was kind of an interesting process.

When I went into the position, I didn't really have an idea as to how long this would be a commitment: they said they needed somebody that would be prepared to make a commitment for three years at least. I was prepared to make that commitment but I didn't have any vision as to what the termination would look like other than my commitment that I would be aware of the point at which I was not contributing to the organization anymore and make the decision to leave. Certainly the years I was at this position were very exciting years. There were some really innovative and creative things happening and things were running along very well. My sense was that the role I was playing was appreciated and valued both within the institution and within the nursing program, so I had absolutely no intent of leaving the job.

At one point (this is probably about six months before I left the job), I was interacting with the person that I reported to--the vice-president--and she stated that one of the goals she had within the next few months was to consider her successor. She was approaching me to consider the role of vice-president. She had this conversation with the president and both of them had agreed that it was something they would do and in her mind too she knew that she would be leaving the organization within a space of time. Although I had known that would happen in the near term, I did not know the specific time frame. I can recall feeling somewhat offended that this decision would come my way. First of all, I had no intent of leaving the nursing program. Second, there

were major projects that were underway that I felt needed to follow through until completion. A change in the senior management person would not be [appropriate at this time]. There had been lots of agonizing interpersonal problems within the faculty that were just now appearing to be resolved. All these things were coming together within the nursing program so that it was not a good idea, from my perception, to be changing leadership.

So when this question was asked of me it started a very difficult time for me. At first I thought there is no way. I can't leave this program. I have never been interested in this type of administration before. How could they even ask me to do this? Who wants a job like that anyway? It would be so demanding, and I would be working long hours. Anyway, this thought process went on. I can remember extensive discussions at home. You know--this is what's being offered me. Should I think about it? I will probably never have this opportunity again if I don't take it. It would be a wonderful learning experience. There are people I would be working with I have worked with before, [including] the president. I know that I respect him and he is a creative leader. All of this decision-making went on for weeks and weeks and it was a very tumultuous period for me. But there came a point at which I decided that, if indeed I was going to have more opportunities in my career, I couldn't pass up this opportunity. How often does someone have a vice-president job handed to them on a platter? If indeed I rejected it, I felt I would probably miss a opportunity to have a different or a more advanced experience in my career. So in the end I did decide, after a lot of questions like: Could I even do it? Would I be viewed as credible? What assets do I have to bring to this? I decided

if other people can do it, I can do it . It's something that I just needed to take on. I realized that nobody was indispensable. In fact I would still be responsible for the nursing program but from a rather different perspective, so I decided to take the plunge. It was not because I was disillusioned with the role of program administrator. It was not as if I was not succeeding in the role of program administrator, in fact probably quite the opposite.

One thing about me is that I am very easy to read. There were people at work that knew something was wrong and apparently I was just not acting like myself. I don't think I have ever had such a weighty decision to make but there were some people at work who approached me and said--Is something going on that is troubling you? Is there some way we can help? So I did confide in them. I didn't choose them, they chose me. This was just a handful of people, maybe three or four, but I think they were very understanding. They were very non-judgmental. As much as they expressed that this would be something they would really be concerned about and miss my involvement in the program to the extent that it had been the case, they were very willing to encourage it and very interested in following the process of all this. It certainly wasn't a daily discussion but there were milestones in the progress that they would need to be aware of. They were certainly kept abreast of those and certainly if they asked any questions the answers were provided.

This was my decision-making process so I did not share any information with the faculty about what was happening until a decision had been made that I would be appointed to this position. There were probably significant reasons for that. I didn't want to alarm anybody

unnecessarily when the decision-making process was not complete--I guess that was the primary reason. I was very much a program administrator with the faculty. I was not one of their pals. I just felt it would be inappropriate to share that kind of very personal decision-making with the faculty as a whole. The people who were aware of the possibility of my leaving the program were working closely with me. They were part of the administrative team but they were people that came to me and said something is wrong, let's discuss it. Part of my nature is to be very honest with people unless there is some very significant reason for not being up-front.

I guess the idea that my immediate superior and the president would have enough confidence in me to offer me this role, knowing that the lack of the competition, etc. would be an organizational problem, probably gave me a lot of confidence in what other people perceived as being possible. With respect to my family, some of things that we discussed were the time commitments, the demands of the role and the travelling that would be involved with it. If I hadn't the support and the back-up of my husband and child and their willingness and encouragement, I would not be encouraged to do so and in fact I would not have done it. When you're in a role like this you need to be able to rely on someone to take care of child care first thing in the morning when you know that you have to be here at seven in the morning. It would have been just impossible for me to undertake this role under different circumstances.

We actually debated what to do with the program but one of the things that I was concerned about, and actually negotiated into my

arrangement with the institution, was that I would give this job a six-month trial period. The institution would allow that six- month time frame from their point of view as well and if things weren't working out, then I would go back to the nursing program. In retrospect I am not sure that that would have been possible. The idea was that we would not even start the recruitment process for the program administrator until half of the six-month period was up. During that time we viewed it as an opportunity for the people who had been working in administrative positions in the institution to gain additional experience and they were quite enthusiastic about that as well. We actually identified a team of people who would function administratively and then divided off the key responsibilities for what was happening.

Each of those people took a segment of the role and then functioned as a program administrator in the decision-making regarding that aspect of their function. The group process worked fine. I think the people enjoyed the opportunity that they had and I was simply available to intervene on issues that arose because I was still responsible for the administration of the program from the perspective of my new role.

We worked very collaboratively even while I was there. The administrative team worked very closely together and I think that's a reflection of my philosophy of how to work administratively with others. Because I do work very collaboratively with the people that I am involved with, I feel that at any one time they are informed as much about what I am doing as they are about their own work. At any point they could just slide into the job and take full responsibility for what needs to be done. I then felt that I was leaving the program in a fashion where it could

proceed and progress along the lines it was moving. I felt a sense of comfort more then pride.

I am not even too sure I can remember [my last day as program administrator]. We didn't have any terminal events for me at that point in time because I was very up- front with the faculty, saying that we were trying this for six months and if it doesn't work, then you are going to have me back. We are not going to fill the position. We are not going to recruit until the six month period is over. I am going to be close by. I will still be responsible for the program so we needn't look at it as an ending.

The move was very much an evolution. In fact I had been involving myself more and more in the activities with my present position and at the same time maintaining some limited activities with the program. Although the transition occurred, say over a four-week period, it didn't really work as a transition from my point of view. If I tended to do anything, it was to maintain a clear cut between my engagement at the program and my present position.

The nursing program administrative position was a very valuable experience. I learned a lot. I think the program progressed a lot, not because of me but because of the way in which we worked together as team and the way in which there was a collaborative initiative undertaken by the whole city. The various programs in the city were divided and very much isolationist in their functioning. I guess my involvement in that whole process provided confidence that it was possible to get separated groups to work together as an entity and accomplish something. If I hadn't been in the role of program administrator, I wouldn't be in this present role, because it was the fact that I was there--a credible nurse

with experience in administration within the same organization. [If I had had no] doctoral preparation, I'm sure that this position wouldn't have been offered to me. I am convinced that, if my career hadn't taken the path that it had, I would not being doing what I am doing now. I would probably be doing something just as interesting. It has all been very accidental. The jobs just seem to present themselves and the right circumstances have just been there. I'm not sure that I believe that it is totally accidental either but I don't think that I had a whole lot of role in orchestrating this. I think what people viewed as my capabilities made me a somewhat attractive candidate for the various positions that I have held. I think a lot has been just evolved at the right time and I feel very fortunate in my career.

The Story of Anna

1996 04 14

Well, I think I have to start with acknowledging that being in nursing was a change of choice. When I was growing up in small town, my mother was a nurse, my father was a school teacher. I was very athletic and I was also very involved in music. I can remember distinctly thinking during my high school days which way was I going to go. Obviously nursing and teaching were considered female professions but I was leading more towards physical education, even music, rather than to nursing. But surprising to all of us and very difficult for all of us to manage was the fact that my father died when I was in grade eleven. My older sister was at university and can I remember consciously thinking how is my mom going to afford it, on her nursing salary because she would have to go back to work. She had to go back and commute for 20 miles to a small hospital and get back into the nursing profession. We were old enough to manage the home but I can remember thinking now how is mother just on her salary going to afford to send two kids to university. She partly was to blame for the delay in my choice because since I had been a little one, she use to always say to everyone, [Anna] is going to be my nurse because she looks so good in white and I can remember thinking I am not going to be a nurse. I am going to make my own choices. I am not going to have my mother telling me what I am going to be. But at that point in time and given those circumstances, I thought well maybe I will try this nursing stuff because there is a stipend and basically I get room and board and I can do this and take some pressure off my mother. We will get my older sister finished at university

and then at that point I can decide what I am going to do. A year and a half behind me was my younger sister so she was coming up too so there were going to be potentially three of us needing post-secondary education. There was no choice that I was going on to post-secondary education. My father was an immigrant whose message was very clear: education was very important and we were supposed to go to school. We were supposed to go on and study.

So off I went to a nursing program. Well, I guess because of my upbringing, in a small town, involved in student council, involved in a lot of community work, and my music, I found I was fairly self-confident. So, I got involved in student's union, and I got involved in other things as well, and I had a very successful nursing career as a student. Got awards at graduation. Had a great sense that I could do this job and thought at that point in time that I was glad, very glad that I had chosen nursing as a career--in fact I loved it.

From the first few contacts with patients there was no question in my mind that this was the way to go for me and that I was in the right niche, and of course I had to tell my mother that because she had deemed that to be true all the time, but after getting over my rebellion I was in a perfect niche for me. So I then basically was already working on, I guess, what I would look back at now as my interpersonal leadership skills which have continued to evolve on a parallel plane with what was happening to me professionally. I went off to a university to do the post diploma nursing degree with a major in teaching and supervision. I could combine, interestingly enough for me, teaching with nursing. That had never crossed my mind before. I was always going to

leave nursing and go into education to do physical education or music until I got to university and the teaching and supervision major. I hadn't thought of being a teacher of nurses. I had always associated nursing with the clinical skills and I was very proficient as a clinical nurse but now to combine teaching with nursing seemed like a marvellous fit. I always saw it as a wonderful opportunity to stay in touch with patients and in clinical setting have those students that I could influence their values and skill development.

So I did my two-year post-diploma degree. Came out of there and started teaching. I never intended to stay in my home town. I dabbled a bit in some summer work between school years with general-duty work in a small rural hospital. I started teaching in a nursing program and I was just in a holding pattern, doing teaching in a program because I was close to home, and I could keep in touch with my family.

At that point in time, and family always has a great deal of influence, I don't know how many people have admitted to that but my mother died of cancer at Christmas, leaving a younger brother who had been born quite a bit later. He was fourteen at the time. My only thought in my mind was for me to maintain some balance at home for him so that as a family we could get him through a few critical years after mother died and so that's the role that I took on. I took a job teaching in a three-year, hospital-based RN program. My role at the nursing program was teaching both clinical and classroom and it was very satisfying job. We were able to do curriculum changes in the program but I was always kind of into the change agent theme. The institution administrator was looking for some new ideas and rejuvenation to the curriculum. The

administrator wanted to spiff the place up so the institution administrator looked to the young people--the new, freshly-prepared people.

Me because of my cheekiness and gall took on the curriculum revision of the nursing program curriculum. We did a lot of professionalization of the staff at that point. We made a conscious effort to sever the relationship between the service attitude of hospitals and the need to be an autonomous nursing program. As a student, my program director was truly a nursing leader, very impressive and intellectual and her message was that nursing education had some distinct standards and we were not apprentices and we were not working under the auspice of hospital service needs, and so she designed a curriculum for us to be educated. That's all I knew. That's what I expected and there was a high standard for you to be a student and learner but still clinically proficient and also having the theoretical base for your nursing judgments.

So we had quite a re-vamp to do for the nursing program but the institution administrator, as I said, who wanted this done, became a very strong supporter of me, and I kind of cajoled and worked that program through a curriculum revision process. That process instilled in me the interest to go on to graduate school. I was interested in the whole business of structuring and formulating curriculum. Certainly the politics of institutional work such as how to get staff to work as a team. There were some very strong factions in there. Why they listened to me or worked with me I don't know. I had to try to figure out why that was happening and that I had better understand how I got there and how this stuff worked. We put together a really excellent curriculum for the nursing program and I think we were in a transition and it was either that or go

down the tube. They felt pride in what they had done and they wanted to go with a good curriculum and so it was a lot easier for them to know that they could close a program that had some sense of excellence instead of just the winds of time forcing them to close.

So, during that program job I got married. I still felt that this home town job was a temporary stop back to the big life. I had been in an eastern Canadian city for my practicum during my bachelor of science in nursing (BScN) and I saw myself working in some of those settings. So I am at this nursing program and I spent a year and a half through this evaluation process and the new curriculum was up and running. My husband went back to school after we got married. I had already decided that the BScN was not enough that I was going to do a Bachelor of Education (BEd) to top off my BScN, because although I had probably a pretty good sense of what needed to be in a nursing curriculum, I didn't have a good sense of the structural theoretical discipline of education. He went back to school and he was fanning out applications all over Canada but there was a teaching freeze, hiring freeze in teaching in the education profession. My husband had been given a job in a small rural town some distance from a nursing program and our present home. I had an interview with the director of a new program in my home town. Eventually, my husband received an offer from a school in our home town and I had an offer from the director of the new program. We decided to take the new job offers and stay in our home town. I took the position because I saw the future of the diploma nursing programs in the community college setting.

I was assigned to teach in the first year of the nursing program. I

can remember vividly facing eighty-plus students in an amphitheatre because we were also going through the budget cuts of that era. So, I started teaching at the new nursing program and it was an exciting place to be. I started teaching in the classroom and clinical areas. Did a lot of committee work for the program and also became involved in organizational management from the faculty association perspective.

My evolution in terms of the faculty, I was still studying, doing a BEd at a university part-time. Had myself to the point that I was almost completely finished the BEd and then had the opportunity for a sabbatical. I had had a couple of children and I can remember having a couple of really rough years personally and professionally. Very much enjoyed what I was doing teaching but feeling that need to get back and stimulate the mind, but I was not too sure what kind of program I was interested in. I had two small children at home. I had to make some of those choices around those issues because that's who I am and nobody forced me to make those decisions. That's why I did it.

I evaluated different nursing programs and master's programs and I was, after six years, qualified for a full sabbatical according to the faculty association. Others in the program had started their graduate work so now it was my turn. You know there is that mentality in close-rank groups. There are so many sabbaticals offered each year and there is kind of an expectation that it will be cross-representational what programs would get the sabbaticals. You went into a competition with other programs but there was kind of expectation that one year it would be this program and the next year that. You couldn't be so crass as to believe you could get everyone of your faculty through each year one at a

time. The sabbaticals were being shared by a much smaller group of programs for some reason at that point so you could be pretty well guaranteed that you would get a sabbatical. I was thinking about my choices. I can remember consciously making a choice to take the Master of Education (MEd). I had done so much foundation work in the BEd that I had a leaning towards instructional style, curriculum, curriculum theory and just the whole process that went into how did we as nursing faculty acquired the ability to put together a total program--all of its threads and all of its components. I decided to do a Master of Education degree. The MEd program was courting nurses into a program that was designed to be delivered 4:30 to 10:00 p. m. at night for teachers after school and I could get a sabbatical.

So after doing a lot of soul searching on what would this mean if I didn't because I was a pretty "unhappy camper" at that point. Personally and professionally feeling that I had to do something. I tried everything. I volunteered until the "cows came home". I was president of a local association. I think those four or five years filled that important niche of developing another side of me. I would have been much more restless at the program if I hadn't had that also. It provided leadership training. Nationally, I was travelling across the country representing the association. I was meeting with some very exciting professional women from all walks of life. I got to know a cross-section of people. I have said publicly many times that I believe that I developed my social conscience from the association because I was just working within the very narrow, insular worlds of nursing community, just relating to nurses. I started because I wanted to see more than teachers. Women working on behalf

of the community, challenging, stimulating, leadership skills developed in me and I really was able to grow in a whole bunch of my own skills I use on this job now.

Well, now the association activity started to wind down. I've still got to make a choice of school. I've got a son three and a son five but a very supportive husband who acknowledges that I really should do graduate work. So I got permission for a full- time sabbatical and I had consciously chosen a specific university program to study curriculum theory. My reasoning, and I got a lot of flack from some of my professional peers, I think you can imagine. We were just starting do that terrible (I called it trying to be more than we were) time, but there was this purist movement. You were not really a nurse professional unless you had studied at the masters in nursing level in great deal some very narrow portion of nursing. It was better in their minds for me to have taken a master's in nursing with a nursing education focus than it was for me to take a master's in education. Study the discipline of education and apply it to my nursing. Well, I thought that was all wrong. I wanted the purest sense of educational theory, broad-based, and I had been in nursing long enough, and I had been in nursing education, and I wanted to see how would I apply that. Not have some nurse teach me some watered-down version of education as it applied to nursing education because I thought it had gone through too many steps.

So that's what I did. I registered at a university. I started in the summer picking up credits. I even started the winter before dabbling with some senior courses that I could apply for credit. I had about two full credits under my belt by the end of that summer. I commuted and took

the 4:30 to 10:00 p. m. classes three days a week. I got a good cross-section of courses but I was home with my kids. My five-year old was in kindergarten. It allowed me to be a kindergarten mom with all the cookies and all the other stuff in the mornings, and I took the kids to a daycare for the afternoon. My husband would pick them up after school. I commuted for the 4:30 p. m. class. Sometimes scary. I was reading my book in the car. If you've done commuting, I am sure you have tried some of those stupid things too. I would be reading books on my way. We had a big, heavy Buick that you would just rest your book on the dash and that road did become boring. I'd leave after lunch. A quick little route. I "jigged-jagged" right into campus.

As a graduate student, they gave me an office so I kind of had a place when I was on campus to store books and stuff. I went three days a week and I "jiggled-jagged" the schedule until I could get my three days to be quality days of work. I carried a full load and did that back and forth. I would leave the university at about 10-10:30 p. m. from the campus and I don't know if you ever remember an old CBC Radio program that came on in the early morning "Hello Vacuum Land", and these two guys kibbutz back and forth. Honest to God, that was my salvation because if I heard "Hello Vacuum Land" I was on my last leg. So three days a week I did that. That allowed me from Friday to the following Monday to do course work around home life and be there for the kids. This was a wonderful scheduled envisioned from the start but the end of that fall semester I was a "dish rag". I ended up getting a bad "strep throat", and I was wiped out.

So, I had this "kid brother" that I had looked after who lived near the university. He and a bunch of young roommates were teaching in the

school system and they had room in their house for me to bunk in with them. So we changed the schedule. I still commuted but I commuted up on the Tuesday and stayed overnight with them on the Tuesday night and the Wednesday night to take the pressure off the commuting. My husband was able to manage those two nights on his own although I had terrible guilt. Terrible guilt. One of the kids would get croup often and one of my faculty peers would look after the kids when my husband had to take the child into the hospital. The kids seem to have survived it very well. I think I pushed myself very hard because, as all working mothers find, and I talked to a lot of professional staff that are women, you have to cope with some of those things. So I was able to bunk in with my brother and his buddies, and what an exciting time that was, and it certainly took the edge off my travelling so that I was able to complete most of my courses. My courses focused on curriculum theory and wouldn't you know it I had received some stimulation from the staff and faculty that we should do a curriculum review and revision for the nursing program, so my thesis project was curriculum revision process for the program.

At that time, the program [director] left the program while I was in the middle of my last course. So I came back from graduate school to apply for the [director] position. I was given the position. One faculty member chaired the curriculum committee. We had good support from the institution president for the curriculum changes so off we went with his blessing. I can honestly say that I entered into that project and into that directorship because of the mental stimulation of doing the curriculum review and using the theory that I had just studied. I was still applying the theoretical processes that I had learned. Well, of course, with that

directorship came a whole bunch of--well the political stuff but that wasn't a problem--I had good support. The deans were okay; they never interfered. The one dean ended up being the permanent dean for the program and a mentor for me for the next ten years. Basically, we had the support of the administration through the president and that got us through some pretty rough times on this campus, change of administration and change of budgeting. I can remember vividly at one point in that process the president coming to me and saying the institution is getting money for a new building. Put down on paper what space you want. Nursing will be moving into this new building and you can have what you need and I was just stunned. In his mind, nursing got a big part of it so we designed our part and other parts of the building were used by other departments. We really had carte blanche. Certainly there was some resentment in the institution that you would pick up when you started to talk, but it just kind of went underground. We had a lot of space on campus. It wasn't like we were rousting anybody from the facility.

I was very busy. I was very busy with the kind of notoriety that came with this curriculum process and I had some really good friends in the provincial education group. We kind of chummed together. We were all in the same boat professionally and personally and the schools were all--we were new [directors] so we kind of formed a bond. I was busy doing the nursing professional thing--what would you call it? I guess I was developing a power base. I wasn't consciously developing a power base but I was enjoying what I was acquiring in terms of self-esteem from the interest people had in me. I was on a provincial nursing committee.

That was very demanding. A lot of time away. The nursing program was getting a lot of touting for our work in curriculum. I was [director] of the nursing program and probably the biggest growth of my professional record, I suppose, occurred during that period. Credibility provincially for whatever that was worth at the time. A lot of jobs that spun off of others jobs I was involved in. Working with major nursing leaders in administration and education but a lot of time out of the office. Curriculum review was going very well. Curriculum review was done and we had implemented it.

But, that's when the politics within the nursing program started to come to play. The faculty had been stimulated and excited by the new curriculum work. They were enjoying the reputation that was going with me and the nursing program but I guess they had certain needs for me to be in the office. When I look back on it now I can read the signs a lot better. During those difficult times, we started to hire new faculty and as is often the case it is difficult to bring new people in to a situation and have them blend well with the present faculty. I was rather naive in my beliefs back then but I have since learned to put everything into perspective.

I was strung out after having done all that studying and travelling and I was not in the mood after getting back after all of my road trips to deal with the many different difficulties. I did what was supervisory. I did what I thought a good supervisor would do to a certain point and after that I thought I am not going to do any more. I did a lot of good professional development. Promoted getting them off to school if that is what they needed. But the bottom analysis was that, after coming through the

excitement, they went into a down phase. So at that point in time my three year term as director I decided consciously that I wasn't applying for the [director] position again. They wanted someone who stayed home and kind of looked after them better. I went to my supervisor and explained to him where I was coming from personally and professionally. My kids were at the age, I was missing clinical teaching, my work was taking me more and more away from the clinical teaching. I can remember saying to him, you know, I have been thinking about my choices and I have decided that if what I like so much is clinical teaching, I ought to be doing it and I have the right to that choice.

So I did not take the [directorship] again. Went back into clinical teaching for five years and still contributed to the curriculum. Got my kids through five important years. It took me quite a while to wean myself of some of the provincial connections. Very important for the program and at that point to be carefully aligned with what was going on provincially. I didn't enjoy the travelling. I wasn't doing it all the time but I could have done less, but it finally slowed down during the middle of that clinical teaching era; going back to clinical teaching was right for me. I did love it and I did it well. I had great rapport with the students. I have very high standards. They used to have a name for me which I won't state here. Good rapport with clinical people, and I had kept my clinical skills. I hadn't been gone long enough so I had kept my clinical skills current. So I had a wonderful five years. Just a wonderful five years.

Interesting for you, I don't know whether this theme will come through in some of the other people, but because of the group I was working with provincially, I had been exposed to very unhappy and somewhat

aggressive, ambitious people who seem to have home lives that did not appear to be the type that I wanted. Well, needless to say that was part of my reason to go back into clinical teaching, because I thought I don't want to be like that. I have no long-term aim to shatter what is fundamental to who I am for some job. There was none of that ambition in me. My ambition had always been to do well at what I was doing. Make sure I was intellectually stimulated and on top of things, to develop organizational skills, interpersonal skills, and leadership skills. I had had success with the curriculum revision, and I knew what curriculum was, and I could give leadership to those that I worked with. I had learned well from my volunteer work. The skills had come from my volunteer association work. Managing 200-400 volunteers and dealing with political leaders and committee groups and stuff. My real sense of where my leadership skills had come from that but not my brief stint as director. So I decided that wasn't a life I wanted. I was making a choice to go back into clinical teaching because that was what I liked to do. I was also making a conscious choice not to be a product of that fall out on my personal life. I was taken aside and asked if I knew I was cutting my professional throat (by going from [director] of the program to going back down to clinical nursing), and I said I am really not interested in that fallout because it doesn't matter to me. I didn't do this job because I have desires for the next level. Certainly I am not going to continue to do the job if that's the consequence, and I am going to do something I like to do and that's my choice. That's what I did for five years and it was really fun. Well, as you can imagine five years of clinical teaching, mostly surgical although I did lot of curriculum work. I did a lot on the enrichment

side of clinical teaching, but once again at that point in my professional career work became not enough for me again.

The nursing program experienced some organizational changes during that time and a new position came up that would be in charge of the nursing program. I applied for the position and didn't get it. They offered it to someone else and I was very disappointed. I was also being courted for another job. So I thought, well I can sit here and I had to consciously decide am I going to work for somebody else. My pride would have allowed for that but it was not going to help me to grow if I didn't get this job. I knew that I wanted to make some changes in my professional life. Even though I was being courted for another job, I was still very loyal and committed to the nursing program, and I didn't want to just "pack my tent" and go. The offer was out to this other person. As I said, it was very hurtful so I thought, well, I think I had better tell somebody about this. So I went to the head of division and I think in a very rational way I explained to him what this meant to me in terms of what I had done for the program and what I had done for the college and just itemized where I was professionally and personally. He was pleased that I had informed him.

I am a direct, up-front, confrontational person. I do not hold grudges and I do not let things fester in me. If I have an opinion, I express it. If people don't like my view-point, I don't hold grudges. If I have a disagreement with you, you will hear my side of the story. The one thing is, I am consistent. I don't remember or maintain any festering bad feeling for anything--it's over. I go home and sleep like a baby. I have never carried a grudge. I don't let that kind of stuff bother me. My

message is, I can choose to let those people bother me or I can get it off my chest and then I can forget about those issues and that's what I do. So I had confronted the issue. Had been straight about my feeling and left it at that. The person who was offered the job believed that there were politically more advantageous positions for them than here so chose not to take the job and then they offered it to me.

At that point I had to seriously think was I going to do this job. They didn't want me in the first place and now they wanted me to do this job. I decided I would but then I also confronted the faculty. I told them very clearly that I was not the same person who had been their [director] before, and that they needed to get on the table for me what were the things they thought I was still not going to do for them and how do we work that out. I think that was probably the best thing that I could have done because the ground was clear and we started a new cycle. I was a new person. I think the difference between administration as I had done it when I was [director] before that (in spite of the fact that I wasn't here a lot for them because of the work I was doing in the field), was I really cared deeply about what they wanted and what they thought of me as a [director] had an impact on me. Throughout all that era I worked from the standpoint of their influence on me; I was very acceptable to them as a peer but it was when I was their [director] that they had to change their thinking of me and that was difficult for some.

But, having put on the table when we started this time around I was that much more mature and I had had that much more reinforcement from my skills, I really didn't care if my decisions were all popular. I was a lot more mature as an [director]. I didn't do things based on the politics of

the department. I studied things. I evaluated them. I still used a fair amount of influence, the influencers of the faculty ranks, but I tried to make rational choices and I didn't spend my time worrying about whether or not long-term friends of mine agreed with my decisions or liked me. I literally, to this day, do my job not caring if people like me or not. I try to make the decision based on right choice given the facts and information I have not to try and court favour and be popular. When I crossed over that benchmark, then being an [administrator] was a "hell" of a lot easier. The three years of that tenure as [director] were very difficult because I was very sensitive to everything that I felt in the environment, not terribly effective at managing it, but it was very emotionally draining. Now as a new [administrator] of the nursing program with a different title and authority, I never let that bother me again. I think I matured quite a bit administratively as a result of that. Being [administrator] of the nursing program at a different level put me right up within the ranks of the academic leadership of the institution. So I sat at the table with all of the other department leaders. I was on the budget committee. I could actually do a lot of influencing of what was and still is one of the bigger landmark programs for the institution.

I did that job for a year and a half. My connectedness to nursing was what I knew and who I was. I think that was the right place for me in terms of the rest of the faculty. I was the right person for the job at the right time. We went through program reviews, provincial accreditation. I could actually organize structure, manage policy around staffing, and build our repetition. So for that year and half I just kept working on the politics of the institution to make sure that we were secure.

Then, lo and behold, my mentor and dean decided to retire. I applied for the position and I knew the competition for the position was going to be stiff from within the institution. The faculty is a mature faculty. The whole divisional faculty is a mature faculty but there are only about four or five of us who have done any upper-level administrative work. There were a lot of people across the other divisions who wanted to compete for the job. I didn't have any interest in the job. I was very satisfied with what I was being able to do but I got a lot of pressure from the rank-and-file of the division and very diverse pressure. My message at that point was that they would work for me. I did a lot of talking and soul-searching and decided well, I couldn't lose anything by applying for it. I paid a bit of tribute to the compliments--there were two or three people who came to me trying to talk me into applying--and I really respected their viewpoint. I thought if people like that think I can do this job, then I will at least do them the credit of applying and interviewing. Got thinking about some of the things I could do. In terms of evolution of my skills and thought I will try it. My immediate supervisor and I had had many discussions over the years and our relationship really solidified when I came to him as [director] of the nursing program and told him that I had other values and needs and I was going back to what I liked to do which was teaching. He was still teaching as a dean so he knew where I was coming from. We talked about personal philosophies, values, the issues of evolution of the institution, the administration and so, for that year and half that I was [administrator] of the nursing program, I was functioning on quite a different plane with the then-dean. So we would talk about family and personal things, and we just had a lot in common in

terms of our values about people. He had a great sense of respect for the program that I led. We also had the same personal philosophy about people, respect, and the development of people.

I was offered the job. It was scary to apply and even scarier to be offered it. I really have never looked back. It has been a tremendous opportunity. I was able to work with the former dean for about three months and I took over my new position in January. My former position was eliminated at that time and the leadership of the nursing program became what it was before I took the [administrative] position of the program. Now I had to make the transition myself before January into the new office. I distanced myself during that fall, kind of a gradually weaning of the intensity of what it meant to me just to remove myself from nursing. The process was conscious but very painful. Because I was going to a division that had a lot of programs I had to be conscious that I was going to become a dean, not the nurse who had a few other programs to look after now. That would be an injustice to all the other programs. They had the right to expect that the dean would give them equal time and attention. That was somewhat complex because I could sit in that office and for a lot of people I was still doing nursing work. I had achieved a certain amount of recognition as a nursing leader. I was still thought of as the senior nurse in the next office to the [director] of the nursing program. That was complicated by work I was doing with the collaborative nursing program.

Because of the collaborative work I was still perceived by other nursing programs as being in charge of the nursing program. This took a while to change but I have been able to gradually wean myself of that

perceived role which now allows me to be seen as a dean with a nursing program. It's complicated, however, in that it allows my liaison with nursing to be extended beyond a clear severing and because of the intensity of the work that has been going on in collaborative work I am there at the table as required. Now, in the past, that was because of the way we designed the work structure of the collaborative planning team. We took our administration on here and said this is causing problems for the [director] of the nursing program. The administration wanted and respected what and I and the [director] of the program could do and that was our structure. The rest of them should accept it, but it was causing problems for the credibility of the program director within the ranks of the other nursing program leaders. The implication was that, unless I spoke and gave approval, the program [director] at a collaborative meeting didn't have the power. The vice-president on the other hand wanted to give his feedback from the administration through me and so I directly had to be involved in passing on messages in the middle and that meant that I still have continued to be in the middle of that but not at the meetings.

I pulled myself away from the collaborative meetings but said clearly that the program director speaks for the institution. The program [director] still has to report through to me and explain it to me to get my approval and I take it to the vice-president. It has extended my ongoing involvement, however, in nursing. No different than the rest of my programs but allows me because of my history to keep somewhat of a handle on it and I wouldn't probably be involved in a lot of the day-to-day details of other programs as much because of the intensity of what's been

happening because of collaborative nursing. So I have been able to gradually wean myself of that but it did mean that my transition out of nursing to a dean was little more gradual.

I think I consciously made more of a separation then the model allowed me to make. I remember the the advice a good nursing friend told me--there comes a time when you'll know that you can't do the job any more. She alluded to a story. She loved to tell stories. She told of walking through a large United Kingdom (UK) teaching hospital and a cardiac arrest had happened, and they called a code and she, from out of the scene, was observing the cardiac arrest team go to work, thinking to herself, my God I couldn't do that. I'd say about a year and half after I was dean that I realized that my administrative operation was very, very big.

So, I consciously severed myself from being involved in nursing when I realized I couldn't do the nursing job anymore and that's been painful. In fact my husband and myself still talk about maybe if I leave administration that we would retire to the States and I would go back to nursing. When I go into the hospital (and it's rare), God, I miss it and some of the nursing faculty tell me what's going on. I guess there is a look that comes across my face and they'll say "You still miss it, don't you." And I say "Yes I do" and I mean that sincerely. When I officially really severed myself was a year ago when I moved my office, because as long as I was next door to that nursing office, in the minds of that nursing faculty I was still theirs--their charge nurse. The rest of the division came to accept that I was working on their behalf. They didn't see a lot of me. I was just there so they knew I was there. I made the official severing geographically and everything from the nursing

connection.

Well, it was a poignant moment, I can say. I had done a lot of that other severing in my own mind long before they had allowed me to sever from the program operations. It was a conscious choice to come down here and I had a new whole operation to run. I had to get to know all these new people and I thought it's really time for them to go on their own and not feel my physical presence or see my presence. I looked at it from the standpoint of excitement. It excited me to take over a new operation. I now have many programs and the student body that I supervise is very large in number. It is very complex. I knew it was going to be very challenging and demanding but everything I do I kind of sort that all out and then go for it. I came down here ready to go to work and I didn't let any of that tag on emotionally. It didn't bother me. I am rather proud of what we've done in nursing. I still have a little twinge every time I stand up at the graduation and I guess I still make it clear to some. We have now come through the last class of nurses that wouldn't have seen me sitting as program administrator and don't have any sense of me other than as the dean. Other classes all had that kind of tint of my nursing background. I don't feel that anymore.

A great job--nursing--all of them! I always made the choices because I needed more challenge. I wanted to grow and develop my leadership skills. It was always stimulating and my mind always had to deal with things that I loved to deal with and I loved it.

The Story of Josie

1996 07 05

Well, it's interesting to have an opportunity to talk about yourself. You know, all of us are showoffs and like to talk about ourselves. I think perhaps I should start before I did nursing, just around where I made the decision, because it was not a decision that I made in the usual way. I did not want to be a nurse all of my life. If I had had my druthers, I would have been a mathematician. That was the only thing that really turned me on in high school but [due to] circumstances (financial, etc.) I did not have that opportunity. Someone suggested to me that I take nursing because it was relatively inexpensive for me to take--I would get paid some money, I would get free uniforms and it was free board and lodging for the year. That's how I entered nursing. I did well and we had what was called a preliminary training school which you had to go through first and if you didn't pass that, you couldn't go on into nursing. I did very well in that and I formed some friendships in that group. Among those friends were some women who probably would have been called being in the "jet set" in our present-day language and I found myself tutoring them to get them through preliminary training school. That followed for the whole three years of our program: I helped those students get ready for exams and so when I finished nursing (and by then I liked nursing very much) there were people saying to me that I should teach nursing.

My first job after graduating from nursing school [was] as a school nurse in a residential school. It was a very unique school. It went from the equivalent of kindergarten to Grade 13 or pre-university. It was residential and coeducational and the faculty were extremely well-

qualified. It was a school [which] had very little money and the teachers were paid very little but they were brought together by a very charismatic head. Every night after supper all the faculty would meet at his home for coffee and this was where I believe I had my greatest education. I learned about a lot of things that were not in nursing--I learned about art, I learned about history, I learned about opera, I learned about all sorts of things because there were these well-educated and very charismatic teachers. I hardly spoke a word the year I worked there because I was not in their league in terms of what they had to offer. So from there I went to the [United Kingdom] as a staff nurse and I worked [there] as a head nurse. I came to Canada and [continued] this business of tutoring, helping students--I liked students.

I was very good to students as a staff nurse and when I came to Canada decided I would go to university. In those days, you did a diploma in nursing education first. I got a job after that with [a nursing program] and I worked for a year. Then I decided I would go back to university and do another year and get my degree, and they had a job offer for me for when I got out of school. Well, that was the beginning of perhaps a major change in me because I had enjoyed the year I spent there but it was not exactly the nicest place to work. It was my first year teaching and in the formal sense of teaching it was somewhat different from the informal form of teaching that I used to do with students--it was not as much fun but it was okay.

I had been teaching pediatrics so [when] finishing up my degree [and] I had to do a practicum, I went to [a children's hospital] where I did pediatrics. I prepared myself for returning in September to do pediatrics.

When I got there in September, the program directors said, "Oh, didn't we tell you [that you] aren't going to be teaching pediatrics?" and that was the first time I knew that I was not going to be teaching pediatrics. Instead [they] had given me a load--I was teaching anatomy and physiology, sociology, psychology, history of nursing, I was in charge of the library, and I was supervising one clinical group in the hospital as well--it was a grandiose load.

I was given a job with this person from out of town, to aid her in a bit of research on an activity study. It was that era. She needed some observers and [we] were asked to supply observers. I had never done that before. I did my observing and I really quite enjoyed it for a week. She invited me to have lunch with her and so at lunch she thanked me for my work and was impressed with the quality of my work. She asked me what I planned to do with the rest of my life. So as we chatted, I said, "The thing that I would like most to do is to find out if one cannot treat students well and staff well and still run a good institution," because in my mind, [in] this school that I was working [at] neither of those were happening. She asked me how I would go about that and I said, "Well, I suspect I would have to be in a management job," so she said "What are you going to do about it?" I said, "I won't get an administrator's job. I am young by comparison to most of the people in administrative jobs--I won't get it." She said, "If you don't apply, you won't get it."

So I thought about that and I decided that I wanted an administrative job. I saw one advertised and in those days there used to be a triangle sort of management. There was a director of nursing, then there was an associate director of nursing education and an associate

director of nursing services so this one was for an associate director of nursing education and I was invited for an interview. I went to the interview and was interviewed by the administrator. I didn't like him because he was putting down all the people that were working at his institution, all the senior nursing people, and that's exactly the kind of milieu I did not want to be in. I didn't like him, but I also had the feeling that I was going to be offered the job. At that time, there were very few people with their bachelor of nursing so I got the offer for the job. I was quite young and I [was] being offered an associate director's job--this was unheard-of, so how do you turn this down? I didn't like the man and I didn't want the job.

I had the job offer sitting on my desk for about three days when I was asked to go to the telephone in the director's office--that was the only telephone in the school. It was another administrator from another institution inviting me to come for an interview. I had never heard of the program, never heard of the administrator, never saw the job advertised and I said to myself, "I don't care whether I get that job or if I hate that job--this man is asking me for an interview so I am ready to turn down this present job offer." I wrote him a letter and said thank you but no thanks.

I went to the other interview and got the job, a program administrator's position. That particular administrator (who was my direct boss) was a gem. He was a really wonderful man and he taught me most of what I know about administration. In particular, he taught me about the importance of delegation by his own example, and he taught me about trust--those were terribly important to me. That's sort of the history that gets me into administration. That was my first administrative job and I

went there very clearly with this role in my mind, to see whether I [would] make life more wonderful for staff and students. [Could] I teach them? [Could] I treat them with respect? What would be the outcomes of that and would it break down? That was in the back of my mind. There was all sorts of work that you had to do where the job was concerned but that was the guiding light behind what I did.

I left that job because the program was phased out and a new program was developed. I had the opportunity of developing a brand new program. It was an independent school, and we had to put in our own structures such as policies and procedures, and instituting personnel policies. I got a real opportunity there to see how well you can delegate, how well you can trust, how well you could allow for the organization to work and develop in such way that it is teacher or staff-sensitive and student-centred, and I think it was.

I went from there to university to do my master's and in my master's I continued to learn about student governments--the meaning of that, how you work that in as a program administrator. I worked in a residence and you learned a lot about students in that residence.

After my graduate program, I went to another program. It was an old, long-established program where there [was] definite hierarchy and a lot of unhappiness on the faculty. Again, there was this opportunity to try to work with people and to set up the milieu which allows people to give their best. Time went on. We had to close the program and move it into another type of institution, and again I had to supervise the development of programs there. The program was running very well because it had really been a continuation in some ways of the former program. Although

we had amalgamated other people, the groundwork had been set and it was running very well.

We had an organization where there was an [educational chief executive officer (CEO)], [three] campuses, and a [director] for each campus. I was in the largest campus and the [director] had been offered (and accepted) a president's job at an [institution] on very short notice. The [CEO] had also been going on a sabbatical that year but he decided that he did not want a search for another new [director] so he would hire one from the "gang". There was a search team struck [and] there were [quite a few] applications. I put in my application for acting [director] with no expectation of getting it, but more as a symbol that this might be my aspiration, to go into a more senior administrative job and learn the whole system. I was appointed as acting campus [director]. I had at that time [fourteen] chairmen plus [forty-five] [directors] answering to me and I answered to an acting [CEO]. Well, several difficult issues arose during that period which I shall not go into for confidentiality reasons. The acting position should have lasted for a year, but by the time the wheel went into motion for a search, it did in fact last for a year and half.

The [CEO] wrote up what I would call a very difficult search procedure for the hiring of the campus [director]. There was another campus also seeking a [director] for reasons I won't go into [and] he decided that anyone wishing to get the [director's] positions would not get it unless they applied for both principalships. What is more, you would not be considered unless you were short-listed by both places. I had no interest in the other place for all sorts of reasons: it was not my wish to go [there]. I discussed it with my friends and they said, "Go for it, why not, do

it."

At this other campus, there was a favourite son who was a "shoo-in" for the job there. So there was me (who the chairmen at our place wanted for [that] campus) and there was the "favorite-son," the "shoo-in" at the other place. We both applied for both places and there were other applicants, some externals. I went up to the other campus for an interview and was short-listed there. I was short-listed (as expected) at my place, but the man from the other place was not short-listed on our campus because the people in our campus did not want him. So there was a "major back-fire" because that was not what the [CEO] had expected. The other candidate was not short-listed on my campus so he was out of the running. The [CEO] couldn't really change the terms then. It ended up with one of the external persons and myself being the two candidates.

In the meantime, my [CEO] had also come back from sabbatical full of Management by Objectives. During these months (while the search was going on), the whole institution was turned upside down with his view of how Management by Objectives should be used. It was also a time when he wanted to down-size the institution in terms of costs (not in terms of size but in spending) as he thought it was very much out of whack, very much like what we are doing now. That was sort of the whole year. He convinced the board to offer me the other campus and this external man should be offered the campus that I wished. Again, I talked to my friends and they said, "It won't hurt you"--you know, that sort of thing. Reluctantly, I took it.

As I mentioned before, just about every job that I have gone into, I

have known why I am going into [it]. I have known what I planned to do, what I wished to accomplish and for the campus I wanted to be on, I knew some things that needed to be done. I knew the directions we wished to take. I knew where we needed to go and where I would have steered the campus to go. I did not know enough about this new campus and there was not enough in me that said, "This is where this campus should go." So I am going there with an empty copy-book, nothing to start the day with. I decided to take the job, taking up the position on the second of January. This process of Management by Objectives had been going on before and the decision had been made to do a major reshuffle of the campus. Chairmen were moving from place to place, heads, [directors] all sorts of people moving all over. I had no idea whether those were good decisions or not and the [CEO] said to me, "You have to get that done by the eleventh of the month." He wanted everyone to be in place by then. I said, "I can't do that because I don't know the people and that's not the way I do my business. You guys have accepted me because you think I have certain skills but my skills don't match that sort of direction." He said, "I am sorry but it has to be done" so I set out to do it.

Of course they hated me. I would have hated me too, if I was one of them, because I was making decisions on absolutely no information. I did it as best I could and promised I would have ongoing monitoring and learn, all this sort of thing. His Management by Objectives--when I looked at those objectives, none of them made sense at all. We used to meet once a week and I would say, "This objective makes no sense" and "Factually, it doesn't make any sense. This is the situation and you can't do something like that." Sometimes he would agree, so we would strike it

out, delete, put the date and say something like "non-appropriate." Then next he would say, "What about this objective?" and that's the one we went over last week.

I won't bore you because I have shut out most of that from my mind but that has to be the worst job I ever had in every way for many reasons. It was bad all along but I was trying to make the best of it: as I spent time there, I tried to see the directions where we were going.

As campus [director], I went to talk to people in industry and said to them, "Is there anything we can do that would be helpful to you?" They had said to me, "You could train some people. We don't have enough trained people and it would be helpful. Besides that, you could be giving a major service to the province as there is no one in the province training people in this areas. We will give you access to our plants." All of this didn't come in the one conversation but in time it came. They said, "We will give you capital equipment and the dollars which would be sufficient to start this program." I went back, and talked to the appropriate people on my campus and they got very excited about it. I kept the [CEO] informed. (I am not a frequent writer and that was a downfall of mine--not being a detail person.) We met every week and every week I told him what we were doing. We reached a place where we needed to hire one or more staff to plan the program. I had the money. Money was not the problem, but I had to get permission to hire any new staff because we were reducing the number of staff we had.

We had an executive committee that met once a month which included the [CEO] and all of the [directors]. When I got to that meeting, the [director] of the campus that I used to be at (which is the biggest

campus) said, "If such a program is being set up, it should be set up at ours because it is bigger." They hadn't gone out and done any of the preparation work. They don't have access to the plant, which is in my town. The other campus [director] was unwilling to agree. The [CEO] sort of sat back and listened to the discussion going on all around. We left that meeting that day without a decision: it had not been turned down or agreed to.

The next day, I got into my car and went down to the [CEO's] office [about 150 kilometres away] and I said, "What was going on in that meeting? Something was going on there that I have missed because you didn't say a word." He said, "I wanted to hear what you were talking about." So somewhere along I said, "I told you all the time. You know all about it. You know everything I have done." He said, "When did you tell me?" and I couldn't believe what he had said. I could not believe it and I said, "Thank you very much", left his office got into my car and started to cry. I cried all the way back--those [150 kilometres]. I felt betrayed in a most basic way. I thought--I could not work with this man again. I remembered every step that he had made to prevent me from getting this job. I thought--this was one more step [in] not supporting me in my position.

So I called a few friends of mine and said, "I am in the market for a job." At that time, the friends I called were provincial education people. About then I got a letter in the mail from an institution in another province saying, "Your name has been given to us and we would like to consider you for a position of nursing program administrator." The president of that institution called and said, "The person who recommended you spoke

highly enough of you that if you don't mind we would like to have a look at you." I got invited for an interview and (the long and short of it) I got the job.

Now, why did I take that job? Given the fact that I usually go into positions having some sort of goals or something that I want to accomplish, I felt I could help this school to reach a place where they could go on and work, so I took it. I set out to achieve things more with the faculty than with the students.

I had a five-year term and completed one five-year term and [then] had taken another term. When I was about halfway through my second five-year term, I had to start thinking about what I was going to do, whether I wanted to be considered for a third five-year term. Somewhere around there, I started leaning towards not taking a third term. I just felt that there is a level (I hate the word "burnout") which you have said the same things, you have done the same things, you have tried to cross the same bridge and you don't want to do it anymore. Besides that, one of my goals (I had two major goals) besides working with the faculty, [was that] I wanted to start a new program and revise the present program. When those two were in the process of being done, I would have had to start all over again in my mind because I am not a maintenance person. I cannot just sit and maintain things. It drives me crazy. I had to have something that I [would be] trying to accomplish. Some things I wished to have accomplished at that institution I could do outside of being a program leader or as a faculty member. For instance, I wanted to work more with native people.

I had set in motion the personal relationships (and [they] were

good) so I decided that I did not wish to be a program administrator for a third term. Somewhere during that time, the president of another institution (with whom I had worked very closely when I was setting up a new program in nursing [and] who knew my work) had asked me to consider coming to his institution. He wanted somebody who knew the business and would do the job. He had asked me on more than one occasion to consider letting my name stand. I had not done so.

The time comes (about a year before your term ends) when you have to advise the president that you are not ready to consider another term or you are not going to consider another term so the wheels can be put in motion for advertising. When I did that--I said to my president that I was not going to go another term--a notice was sent out to other institutions letting them know that a position was going to become available, which is the usual thing. I was approached again formally to see if I would come to [the other] institution. I never completed my second term because the other institution offered me a job before [that] term ended.

The faculty were aware that I was considering not taking another term. They were informed that I was considering another job. When I finally decided, I told the faculty that I was going. I wanted them to know so that the search for a new leader could start as soon as possible. I wanted the search committee to consider the role and term of the new program leader--and what type of person they wanted to hire. Also, because there were going to be some faculty changes, we wanted to look at what strengths and what weaknesses existed within the program and therefore what strengths and weaknesses we should be looking for in

new faculty. I would say it was through that committee that most formal discussions took place about my leaving. There were faculty who I think were very sorry to hear that I was going. They felt that I gave them a certain amount of stability that they might not have from somebody else because I gave people a lot of freedom. I tried to say to people that my role was as an administrator. I have discovered that I am not even a great teacher. What I try to do is to set up a climate and environment for teachers or for whoever to do their job. I set up the environment, find the resources, find the tools and [they] go along and do [their] job. If I get some glory it is reflected glory, it is not because I can do all those things. Some of them [recognized] that because I was not threatening to them nor was I anxious to steal their glory--there is glory enough for all. There were others that felt, yes the time had come, it would be nice to have somebody new, somebody different and there were some that were glad that I was going.

It was decided to hire somebody from within. When [the person] became obvious, I spent a great deal of time with her, going over the budgets, plans, directions, the internal as well as the external. The external was not only the other departments with whom I dealt with but community things. Work we were doing with the government [and] who in government came from my address card files. My little black book. My contacts. I was very happy with the closing experience with her.

These days I talk a lot more than I used to. At one time I was much quieter, a more private person. I have no family close by my present workplace (or for that matter any of [my] work places) [to discuss things with and to be an influence]. For my first administration job, the woman

who guided the research project convinced me at that luncheon that I could do something and that I should do something. I am fairly quick at that. If I am having a conversation, and somebody says why don't you do so and so, I think about it and [if] it seems reasonable, I'll do something about it right there. I don't discuss it with anybody. I make my mind up. I do it. If after I put "the bone in motion" and it doesn't feel right to me, then I don't continue.

After that, there have been particular faculty members in every place I have worked that have influenced me. It's not so much that they are insiders or part of a personal clique. I have found I will toss ideas off them--and it's not one or two of them. I recognize [their strengths]. If I have a decision to make, I will toss an idea off of you and say, "What do you think of that?" Whether it's personal or whatever, I get an idea, then I toss it off somebody else. It is the same way with my work. I get back a whole lot of different answers, sometimes the same and sometimes different. Sometimes they feel good, sometimes they don't.

In my decisions, I have usually not gone to a faculty member and said, "What do you think? Should I do this or should I not do that?" I am just giving them an idea. For instance, when I was leaving my last job (before I decided to come here) one of the chores that I had was to try and get a half-time job teaching and to use the other half of my time doing either international work or something like that. I did not see myself carrying a full-time academic load given that I had lost touch with a lot of nursing and those kinds of things. So I would go to people and I would say to them, "I am thinking of applying to international work. Do you have any contacts? Do you know what's going on out there?" Bounce ideas

off of them, that sort of thing.

My secretaries have been very good. I have been blessed with wonderful secretaries. I have found in my jobs they're the ones that know most about what is going on and I have trusted them. If I don't have a secretary that I can trust, I have to move on to someone else.

When I look back at leaving, I was very sad in many ways. I had very mixed feelings. I was looking forward (with terror sometimes) [to] taking on a new job because I knew some of the work that had to be done. I was excited about it because I am always excited about a new job. My history tells you that I have moved a lot. I have had a lot of jobs. I have never spent more than ten years in one job so it's not hard for me to move from one job to another. I am always excited about starting off in new places. At the same time, there is a fear about what you're going into. Leaving the last job, I was leaving some good friends in that place and that was really tough. In terms of the job itself, I made my peace with [it]. I was ready to move on.

The Story of Sue

1996 04 30

I had not ever planned to go into nursing in my wildest dreams. I had planned always (at least for the last years of high school) to be a French teacher and I don't know, one day when we were in Grade Twelve, one of the days we were at school, somebody called these girls down to the office to get their needles for nursing. They were some friends of mine and I thought hmm...I was thinking about going to university. Money was tight and I thought I didn't know if I could afford it. These friends were going to nursing and I suddenly thought--I think I will investigate that. So I did. I went over to the nursing program and really kind of never thought I would follow through on it. But I went over the program and met the program director who was in charge of nursing education. My marks were very good so she thought that was wonderful. She made such a horrendous fuss over me that she talked me right into coming into the program. So that's how I got into nursing. I never did think I would go into nursing--that had never occurred to me. However, once I got in I really enjoyed it but I still also quickly realized that I wanted to teach.

So really from early on, when I entered the program, my plan was always to go through the program, work for a bit, go on for my degree and get a teaching job. In my second year, midway probably through my second year, the head of the program called me into her office one day and asked me if I would like to write my RN exams at the end of year two. I said why would that be. She wanted to try to get permission from me to do that as a pilot because she was starting the two-year program. She

was trying to get permission for me to write my exams early. The long and short of it was, I must have not been much of a risk-taker because I declined that offer. I don't think that I would have had trouble theory-wise writing the exams, but I didn't think I was in any way ready to graduate or to practice. The plan would have been that I would have written and I would have had an internship for year three because the program was still a three-year program.

You belong to all your friends by year two. I really felt committed and bonded to my group and I didn't want to be out of step with them. I didn't close the door totally on it but I did tell her that it was something that I didn't want to do. She was disappointed. We just never ever pursued that again and so whether she pursued it and ran into problems getting permission for that to happen or whether she just decided that I was a low risk or something, I don't know. I finished the program.

At that time I was engaged or nearly engaged. Because I would be getting married, I decided to go to a university first and do a diploma in teaching and supervision. I really wasn't interested in public health at that time at all--just teaching and supervision was all I wanted to do. Then the plan was to come back home and finish my degree. I knew I could do it because it was all arts and sciences courses that were left after that, so that's what I did do. So, I went to the university for the diploma in teaching and supervision. Came back. Taught for the summer at a nursing program. Loved that. Finished my degree in my home town.

I applied at three nursing programs for a job. I had gotten a job offer at one program, a three-year program and I had interviewed for the

job at another program. I didn't hear from the second interview. Since I did not hear about whether I had gotten the job at the second program I assumed quite naturally after I hadn't heard for weeks that I obviously didn't get the job. So I had told them at the the first program that I had applied to the other program as well. I went over to the first program to accept the job. Interestingly, I ran into one of the girls on my second interview committee at a grocery store and she said, "Have you decided to take the job?" I said, "I assumed that I didn't get the job because I haven't heard anything." She said, "Well, you have to call personnel tomorrow." So I called and I guess I should have done that before. Anyway, I called and yes, I had gotten the job so then I had a big dilemma. What was I going to do? I had already accepted the first job offer. I hadn't started the job. I really liked the idea of trying a new program. I never did believe even though I made the decision when I had the chance not to write the exams. I did believe it was possible to do things in much more educational way than the three-year programs were. I really did want the second job offer. So I went over and talked to the director who first offered me a job and explained the situation to her. Explained that I had gotten another job offer. That I had committed myself to her if need be. That my first commitment was that I had accepted the job and I would honour that commitment but that I really did want to try this opportunity and if she would permit it and she had other applicants I would like to pursue the second job offer instead. She was very good. She said to me, "That is where nursing is going and you should take this chance while you've got it. I quite understand," she said.

So I did that. The blueprint for the program was wonderful. The

year one had run for one year. I and another teacher started in June. The program director was ill for some of those weeks and so we had to wait for someone to help us get organized. Most of the faculty were on vacation. So we kind of answered mail and sat around. We didn't know what we were going to do for the fall and then when they did come back we had a big faculty planning meeting. So about like two weeks before we started class we were deciding who would teach in what year. The first year was pretty much underway since it had run for one year. So we decided how were we going to work things. Well one teacher decided she would take me under her wing. So that was very nice. She took me into the second year with her and we planned the whole second-year program. So that's basically how I got started. She was a great mentor for me. She really eased me in to it and tried to get me excited which didn't take much. I was pretty impressionable and we worked together for many years.

My mentor took over the program for a while but she still taught. We always talked together and she was great support to me and then she moved off to another program. She asked me to join her the following year. She said, "Why don't you come over the next year. There will be jobs". I really did some soul-searching and decided that that was not where I wanted to be. I really did enjoy the program I was in. The newness of the kids and my expertise was in medical-surgical nursing. I had worked a bit of emergency nursing. I did some clinical supervising during university years and worked emergency as well. I liked to be with the students. I enjoyed teaching the pathophysiology. So I made a decision, as much as I would have liked to have gone with her, to stay

here. Retrospectively now, I may now have wished I had re-evaluated that decision but anyway the long and short of it was this was where I had wanted to teach. It would have been a different opportunity and I should have probably accessed that opportunity for a while. But here I am and this still is where I prefer to be in terms of students.

Let's see what happens from there. Well, I guess basically I taught in second year primarily teaching the pathophysiology. I worked on the medical-surgical areas. Really enjoyed that all over the years with all the students. I have had good rapport with the students I feel and good rapport with the hospital staff so really feel that I have had a kind of an enjoyable time of things. I went back to school in the mid-seventies. I decided that I should head off to school. I was trying to do something else in terms of my own education. I had the opportunity for a sabbatical. I went off to the States and did my master's and I did it also in the area of medical-surgical nursing. I did my minor in education, an education track with a media minor and throughout that whole thing my focus was teaching, curriculum, instruction and updating my medical-surgical nursing skills.

I did take some administration theory classes. I did an administration class in my diploma course, the one you had to take in your degree, and I did take some in my master's program, but they were not in what I would consider the area of my interest. My focus was on curriculum and instruction and that's where I really wanted to head--teaching, curriculum, and instruction.

I came back from that sabbatical. I have always enjoyed good bosses and that's been kind of fun for me. The program director talked

me into taking on a position that she created called curriculum coordinator position and I loved that position as well. I worked half-time curriculum coordinator. I had a one-year release time to get up a new curriculum that we instituted in the early eighties. Then I worked half-time in curriculum coordination--I think half-time teaching and half-time curriculum coordination and I love curriculum. I loved curriculum work. I enjoyed it thoroughly but never wanted to give up my teaching totally. When the program director left and went on to her new position, because I had the master's degree already, some of the faculty were working on master's and some had not master's, I got a lot of pressure to take on that administrative position as director of the program. I never had any aspirations for it. I never really wanted administration--never wanted to do that position, truthfully. It was not something I would have applied for. I do not see myself in an administrative role--personality-wise. Probably don't see myself as being quickly decisive. I see myself as being a fairly good decision maker but I think things through fairly in-depth, predicting what is happening in the future, and it takes me a while to arrive at my decision. I don't see myself as a fast decision-maker, which is what I think you have to do in administration. I don't really like being in a position of power; that's not something that is important to me at all.

However, having been sent on sabbatical, feeling indebted to the faculty that I work with and to the program [director] who was leaving, I did agree that I would try the [director] position. Actually another faculty member and myself co-chaired. We agreed that she would do the clinical coordination and I would do the curriculum coordination. So we said that we would co-chair for half year or at least until the following September

and then we would make a decision like that was to get us through the year and then we would put the [directorship] up for "grabs"--I guess. So we did that. Actually that worked out very well. I did primarily the curriculum. We started work with the university on negotiations for a collaborative program. She took care of the clinical things. The two of us together in the position, although that's not easy because always someone has to become boss at some point, was really nice for us.

The two of us together could come to some consensus. We worked very well together. She took on the clinical role and I took on curriculum coordinator role. We worked together as a really good team and then the two of us became the team working under a new division's dean which was still very helpful. It worked out very well for us actually and yet we didn't see that was a viable option in the long term for a [nursing program]. That really was hard. The division dean would attend all the meetings on campus--the internal communication and the dean believed that a master's-prepared person should be at the table so I would attend all the external meetings. Although I enjoyed those, there was a lot of travel. I wasn't really sure that was the level I belonged at. My kids were young--they were seven and eleven. All of those were the decisions which made me (besides the fact that I never had aspirations to be an administrator) really hesitant about whether or not I really wanted to do an administration job or stay in administration.

Anyway, things went fairly well for that time. We were negotiating with the university for a collaborative program and we really did feel that things shouldn't turn over completely to whole new people that didn't have ownership or weren't involved necessarily. No one on faculty really

wanted to be the program [director]. There were some outside names that were suggested. Some of those became potential problems but still neither one of us wanted to do the job full-time. Anyway, the long and short of it (and because of a series of problems) I said okay, I will try it for a year. I had good back-up. I had my partner working as my clinical coordinator. Another teacher as curriculum coordinator.

[We] continued to meet with the university regarding negotiations for a collaborative program. We had all been at the table, along with our previous [director], in discussions which had taken place over a period of years. Previous discussions had begun at our initiative and had been very fruitful, with considerable philosophical groundwork having been laid. However, because the university was in a period of transition, negotiations had been placed on hold in anticipation of hiring a new [program leader]. Very shortly after the [university director] was hired, we resumed those discussions. When we did resume discussions, while the membership from [the] colleges remained stable, there was a complete change of "players" from the university. At the request of the new [program director at the university], a decision was made to disband the original committee and to form two committees to accomplish the job of developing the new program. There was to be a steering committee composed of [the] nursing program [leaders] and a curriculum coordinating committee which would have two representatives from each program. I was, of course, our representative on the steering committee. The clinical and curriculum coordinators served as our representatives on the curriculum committee.

How would I describe my year in administration? It was one whole

year that I did, actually I thought it was two, but it seemed that way I guess. I really found the constraints at home really hard. I was exhausted. My husband was very supportive and he did lots with the kids but they were at a young age, on their own a lot. There was a lot of travelling with the curriculum and being gone to the provincial education meetings. I took on another provincial committee so with all that I was gone a lot but retrospectively it wasn't that many days, but for a young family it was a lot . I wasn't really comfortable through all that because teaching is my first love. I didn't give up my teaching either in the classroom. I did give up my clinical though. I found that when I did go back in clinical after having a hiatus like with the curriculum coordination, I really felt I wasn't on top of things. So you start to kind of wonder, oh boy!--if you're not going to do this long-term how long do you do this administrative job so that you're own clinical skills are not suffering--and you're not back in that clinical area. So I started to do a lot of examination of what I was doing. One was that I really wanted to be teaching. I knew that and I really wanted to be in the clinical area. I knew that. That's where I was enjoying life. Now I didn't have any of that. I wasn't really finding this job a lot of highs!

There was a lot of meetings, internal meetings and external meetings. Things were not going real well for the collaborative degree program proposal. We were quickly finding that we were losing ground. We were having the support of our president to not give away the "farm", to be very firm about some of the things we really believed in. We were trying to do that but we were not feeling that we were winning. I guess I probably felt a personal slight at the table. We had a curriculum that we

had all jointly agreed to. At the request of the steering committee the curriculum coordinating committee were sent on a retreat and asked to come back with a curriculum plan. This called for compromises to be made by all parties; no one person was real wild about that plan that came back, but certainly it had come from faculty. Having done curriculum over the years, I really feel that faculty needs ownership in the curriculum. So it was really difficult for me to not work with that plan. I really thought we had to work with this plan. We can suggest changes. We have to get together as a faculty and do that. The university people didn't like the plan either. They wanted to put a whole new plan on the table and I thought that would be a personal slight to my faculty. I asked that that not happen. It happened anyway.

So that was the straw that broke the "camel's back" for me. I made it very clear at the start that I was taking the position for only one year. I was taking it for one year and then I am going to make some decisions. I have home concerns. When I look retrospectively at that, I think it could have been a weakening of our stand or that was sort of how I felt. They were entrenched and planned to stay that way. I think maybe there was a perception that they could because I had not decided if I wanted to stay in the position. Maybe that was perceived as weakness, I am not sure. They were most cordial. I can't say that but I just think that it maybe shifted the power base a bit. The other thing that influenced that power base was that they were [heads] of their program and I was a [director]. One of the things that I thought was very important was that our dean should have been at that table. In the position of [director], you are accountable to the dean, and then accountable to the vice-president and

then on up. So there were extra layers. When I would come back with a concern, I felt I had to go up so many layers that the others didn't have to do or that they seemed to be in a position of power in their institution. They could make those decision that truthfully I could not make. I would have to bring the questions back and I don't think those were perceived on my part that I couldn't make the decision. My position was one of responsibility but not authority in my mind and I actually think in terms of administrative structure, too. The dean was very supportive and so you know it was not that we differed even in our perspectives or anything, but I do think that being at that bargaining table with collaboration the goal, it would have been perceived in the university setting as equal footing. It put us at risk, or at least I perceived it put us at risk. I wrestled with that. I wrestled with that, not happy with things, the way they were going at the table. Really, the bottom line--I never really wanted the administrative job in the first place.

I started hearing myself falling apart at home. We even started feeling some faculty conflict. Those of us who were intimately involved in the project were seeing our need to try and to hang on to things and try our best to protect our position. Other people were saying whoa!! I think they perceived that they could do a better job in terms of maybe keeping the relationship going or moving things ahead. So I started feeling a little of that pressure and had to make a decision. My decision was--let me out of this [director's] position. I really didn't want to stay. Maybe I ran to get away from my problems but retrospectively would I do it again? I might try it sometime but it's not my aspirations to do it. I enjoy teaching. I like it. That's where I want to be.

I would do something like curriculum coordination. I like that. I wouldn't mind a change but I am happy we are into the collaborative degree program and we are going to get to try some new things even though this project hasn't gone the way we would have liked to have seen it. We have been able to eventually have some changes. There are some things we are unhappy with but we are kind of determined now that we are into it. We are going to make the best of it. We are going to try our best to try to get some of the things we are unhappy with changed if in fact they prove to still make us unhappy a year down the road. I find it easier to be in a faculty position and be able to kind of enjoy the teaching part of it. Make the best part of it and be up beat and positive and look at change.

I am glad I am not in the administrative helm right now. I still look at the [director's] position and say it's just an untenable position for anyone to be in because you have the pressures of faculty, you have the pressures of the administration. You don't really have the power you need even though you are told you have that power. You have it only to a limited degree, only to the effect that you can manage your own budget and that kind of thing. Still all of those policy making are above you. You have to go through a number of layers and it's pretty frustrating. I think if I were in one of those positions again, I would want it to be a full dean position where you can actually have the power over your own issues--you know your issues of responsibility and accountability. You've also got the authority and power to deal with them. So if I look at why I left, it was a combination I think. Definitely my own personal situation. Number one is that I never had aspirations to be an administrator. If I had I would

have groomed my whole career up through school to take those administrative courses and those administrative opportunities. I think working in an administrative role with the curriculum worked because I have a passion for curriculum work, you know, and a passion for teaching and it's a little bit different. You are trying to grab people and get them together. You are not having to make a few unpopular decisions. Somebody always has to not get what they want but you can basically pull people together where as in the other position it was a little different for me. The kids, the age of my family, and then getting into the new collaborative degree model. Some people would say maybe it was reluctance to change but I don't think so. I have always really believed that we should head towards the collaborative degree program and that is the right way to go but I think it was just the power structure here plus my own personal circumstances that lead me to leave.

So I said "No" and left the position. I got to turn the job over to somebody else and it was a happy decision for me.

The Story of Betsy

1996 05 07

I think it's probably helpful to start in high school, because unlike many people in nursing I never intended to be a nurse. I was thinking of physical education or pre- medicine so I decided to go into pre-medicine. I was very active in sports, was involved in Girl Guides, in student government and that sort of thing. Somewhere along the way I was interested in the health field or the illness field and it wasn't clear to me what I was going to go into.

When I was in pre-medicine, I looked at the upper-division courses in medicine. Sat in on some of them while I was in the first term and decided that I did not want to think of human beings that way and switched into nursing (actually at the advice of the registrar), on my way to physical education--I never got to physical education. I was in an undergraduate program with a great deal of focus on clinical practice.

But, more importantly I had happened always to be an 'outlaw'. I think I was kicked out of nursing about three times during my undergraduate years. In one instance I went on the unit early (I won't go into why), and was carrying boiling water because people hadn't been properly washing a tub that was being used by a burn patient so I went on at five o'clock in the morning without an instructor and I was "caught". I was asked not to do that. So in a sense some of the interactions that I had with the education system resulted in them saying," You shouldn't be in it anymore". To take a second example, when you are student nurse you are always told to never release confidential information about patients and their charts and so I had this firmly ingrained in my head. I

was at one of the hospitals were we worked as students and this man in a suit came up and said, "I want Mr. [So and So's] chart." I said my name, "Could you tell me yours" and he said, "Give me the chart." I said, "I'm sorry. I am looking after Mr. [Jones]. If you could identify yourself then I will give you the chart." He said, "Give me the ... damn chart." The head nurse came back at this time. I didn't know this was Dr. [Smith] who was head of a certain service so he had me kicked out of the hospital.

I called my parents and talked to them and my father said, "obviously if he's the one who got you kicked out, he's the one that can get you back in." So I went over and sat in his office and figured that if I couldn't get an appointment with him I would wait until he came out. Finally he came out at the end of the day and I said, "You got me kicked out and I think I was right and I want you to get me back in again. This is what I was told to do and this is what you did." He looked very amused and said, "What did you say your name was?" And I told him. He asked if I was any relation to [so and so] I said, "Yes he is my father." He said, "Well, hell I come from [your home province] and I knew your dad when I was growing up. I will get you back in." Now I'm still mad about that because the issue was obviously whether it was proper to have behaved in terms of a patient's record. There were things like that that happened while I was in my program so there was always tension between behaving properly accordingly to the hospital policy and so on and behaving in principle about what I was being taught. Early in that world then I became involved in some tension between (on the one hand) what I thought and understood to be ethical behaviour or proper behaviour or even competent behaviour as a nurse, and the systems in which I was

operating.

When I graduated (unlike most university graduates at that time), I went into a hospital where there had never been a baccalaureate graduate before, so I was the first one at the institution. That was interesting, too. I decided after about two months that I shouldn't work on days and I shouldn't work on the evening shift. I should work nights because there was no one around to tell me what to do and I could apologize in the morning if I was doing things that weren't right. So I quite happily got involved in that setting and really thoroughly enjoyed my work and learned a great deal and enjoyed the people with whom I worked. That was a relatively smooth transition, I think, into the world of working as a professional and then like most kids I felt I should go to Europe. I was interested in history and Canada had so many cultures I wanted to actually see--to experience [where they mostly came from]. So I went home to work there in the local hospital and the tuberculosis hospital for about a year to save up my money and live at home. So I saved my money in order to go overseas.

During that time, I got fired from my first job at home on a very simple altercation with one of the nurses with whom I was working in the surgical unit. I noticed her taking a 20 cc syringe, that's a big syringe, and loading it with penicillin. At that time all the post-operative patients were given penicillin and she used the same syringe. So she took this big syringe and changed the needle between patients and gave injections to ten patients. When I saw her doing it the first night I thought, oh my goodness, it is not only procedurally incorrect but even sensibly it's not a reasonable thing to do. So I offered to help her and I boiled up ten

syringes and said, "I would be glad to load the syringes while you're watching so you can see what I am giving them." I won't repeat on tape what she actually said to me. So I said, "You know you are putting me in a tough position here because I think it is a breach of competent care for the patients. There is every reason to believe they could be harmed and this is the reason why." She repeated what she said to me before. I said, "You need to know that I will note this on the patients' charts." I went to let the supervisor know. The supervisor let me know that she didn't want me to work there any more. I then happily worked the rest of the year in the tuberculosis (or TB) hospital, which just gave superb care to long-term patients. It was in the "old" days where we had people coming in from the mines and some children from a high school--in which there was an epidemic of TB in the early 60s.

I went overseas and spent about a year and a half there and received a phone call when I was in the south part of Italy from the dean of a university. She said my name had been given to her by someone from where I had studied for my undergraduate degree and she wanted someone who was young with whom students could identify, in age at least, and would I be willing to come back and teach in pediatrics. I said, "No not without practising in pediatrics, as I had always worked with adults." She agreed to bring me back and I worked with someone who is now a well-known nurse in administration. I spent about three or four months there and then started on my teaching career in [the early 60s]. That dean was a really remarkable woman. She is probably the reason I stayed in nursing. She was very committed to health care in Canada. I think there was something in her background and her sense of politics

that were really important. She was a wonderful role model. She was the kind of person who would arrive in my office after lunch on a beautiful fall day and say, "I think we should go for a drive in the country" and we would spend time together outdoors and we would chat about where nursing was going, what was nursing education about, recruitment of different kinds of people to nursing, what's a program in a provincial university, what's a provincial university for as compared to an American university. So it was an incredible teaching experience. She put me as a junior faculty member on university committees. She assigned me to senior professors of the faculty, very senior nurses whom she recruited. They spend a lot of time with me as a junior professor, with me sitting in on their lectures or their seminars, or working clinically and supervising me supervising other people so I had wonderful education, and a lot of challenges from that vantage point.

I spent about two years there. The dean was very clear when I began and she said, "You have your bachelor of science degree. I won't keep you here for more than two or three years; if you decide you want to be an academic, then you must go back and take graduate training." I ended up being very interested in pediatrics and searched for [a particular nurse theorist] who was then probably the authority in clinical practice in pediatrics. Her focus of work in the United States had been children and she has been a superb clinician. So very early my interest was not in what I think of sometimes as "airy-fairy" or stuff that is not related to heart of nursing but how do you care for people, what is care about, and how do you study it, and how do you help students to learn.

When I completed my master's degree I returned to [the same

university program in Canada] and taught there for about two years. Then I had the dean of my graduate program call an ask if I would take up a position in the United States, in the teaching of graduate students in pediatrics and the supervision of some undergraduate students. But there was virtually no one in the United States at that time that I could identify with who was interested in the six to twelve-year old child--which I was. So I returned to my graduate education university and spent about ten years there. During that time my basic work was in the teaching of students in the clinical area as well as in seminars in the graduate program.

In the mid to later 1970s I became involved in major changes in health care--regional health program planning--as a clinician on various groups. Putting in a health system in a city school system and facilitating major changes in the way health care was delivered to children, so that the concept of putting health care in the school rather than the physician office became part of what I was doing. We created a nurse-practitioner program, which prepared nurses who would be working with physicians and so on as nurse-practitioners in the field--very much like our northern nurses with their training in Canada. I gradually became very involved with people who were not interested only in a child with diabetes but in what the systems that would help give care to children with chronic illnesses. So my clinical model kept being part of my world and increasingly I became frustrated with the fact that hospitals did more harm to children then they did good, so I became interested in that field. That's why I ended up doing my doctorate. When I interviewed people at various universities I said, "I'm a clinician and I don't want to become an

administrator, what I want to do is understand how do you design systems to help care for children." Each of those schools, much to my amusement said, "What are you asking us for? The university you are working for has the key people in industrial engineering, sociology, in management, and in nursing. They are the only group in the country who have brought all those people together." So I started doing my doctoral work, stepped out of my professorial position and returned to school to do my [doctorate] in the design of health care systems. I spent almost six years in course work and doing my dissertation because it was an extraordinarily complicated one. I was asking a very simple question, "What is the relationship between work and structures for work and their impact on effectiveness on the performances/satisfaction of nurses?" I did that in a laboratory. I actually created an organization that lived for only a week and hired nurses into it to look at the difference between structures and structures for work in the daily care of patients.

The tension then became between the fact that there were a lot of people who were interested in having me move into the teaching of health care systems design and the fact that my first love has always been that of a clinical nurse. A lot of my energy came from working with graduate and undergraduate students in clinical work and a lot of that energy got translated into having to build systems and train people in health service administration to help patients. That is where a lot of my attention was until I came to this institution.

But I must tell you about my work as a consultant. I had my own consulting business with three colleagues where we took theoretical and research work we were doing on the university campus and applied it.

We tried to get the hospitals to just let us do it for free, that is, these are things were are learning--we would like to be able to apply in a hospital setting. They all said no. So one of my bright-eyed friends, who is a graduate in health services administration and a real a "snake oil"--I mean he was a real salesman said I think what we ought to do is find out who is the most expensive consultant in the health care field and we will charge about ten per cent higher than they are charging. We will sell ourselves and then we will give the money back to the university, so that is what we did. We worked together for about seven years and it was a very successful venture. So I started working with them before I even started my doctorate. We said we would never write a report because reports collect dust. That we should be paid on the basis of the money we saved the hospital and we put money from those institutions we worked for back into the graduate programs we were associated with--we had a wonderful time. So the four of us worked in United States and South America with governments and hospitals, trying to redesign the delivery of health care or medical care. So my career was one in which I had, by the time I left the university, numerous graduate students at various levels. A consulting practice and a joint appointment in medicine doing research with a team of professionals studying health care problems like the design of policy for the state government. We worked with various politicians in trying to implement a universal payment for health care--what goes around comes around--Clinton is trying again.

Somewhere along the way one of the program administrators here in this province had asked me to be a member of her faculty when she was in the United States and was a dean there. She asked if I would

come up here and I said, "No." But one of the faculty members called who was on the search committee for a new program administrator here at this institution. She said that they had a faculty who were historically interested in the delivery of care and research about clinical practice, for example people who were taking care of maternity patients and learning what were the problems they had and then doing research about it. That was very appealing to me. When I interviewed here, they wanted an external candidate. I didn't know anyone in the province other than two teaching friends, and they persuaded me to take a look at the program. So I then started calling colleges across Canada in nursing and in other fields, because by then a number of my undergraduate colleagues had gone into other fields. So I just started asking colleagues from different parts of the country about the institution and the major message I got was it's probably the best-kept secret in the country, it had gone from a young, young institution and it ranks number one or two in the country in medical research and funding.

When I came here I was impressed with two things: one, the connections between the faculty and the community, which had always been a concern of mine. Very often faculties look at their own belly buttons instead of what is going on around them; and then, secondly, they seemed very interested in thinking about different ways of teaching and this was very attractive.

Those are the things that "pulled" me here and the thing that pushed me was actually a single thing and it was very simple. Many of my friends are still in the States. So what pushed me here was three of my patients died whom I couldn't get care for even in the state where I

worked--which had a pretty good, state-supported system. I began to believe that we weren't getting anywhere in making massive changes in health care in the United States, whether I worked with various associations or worked with the senators or worked with the state government. We just weren't getting anywhere with bringing about change with the present government so I decided that it was getting increasingly difficult for me.

When I came here, I came with an expectation of increasing the profile of the faculty. I mean, when I was hired at the institution the president said to me I want you to see the nursing faculty on the map in Canada. I want you to have a very high profile nationally. I want you to get this faculty of nursing on the map in North America. So that was my mandate when I came here.

Thinking about moving occurred on several levels to me. I am entering a world where I have neither colleagues nor friends in the community. I came into a nursing program that was very well-managed. The former leader had created (well, if you think about the managing of the faculty, they hadn't had a very strong support staff in place), and she made that happen by putting strong support in place, began to promote and develop the secretarial staff, created senior administrative positions to carry the administrative load rather then faculty carrying it, and engaged with people across the country. A very fine leader. I came into a faculty that had experienced very positive and constructive leadership. My interests were in practice and hers were in creating systems that made this work. I began in January, which I meant I was doing the budget--wasn't that fun--and I quickly learned that I had to inform the staff

about the budget process. I started doing walking rounds among the faculty a couple times a day just simply to let people know I was there. I walked into an environment in which most of the communications with the dean were through memos and meetings. I hate memos and I don't like meetings much better. My focus was to continue to support what the administrative support staff were doing and to make growth there, secondly to ensure that the faculty had some understanding how their own resources were allocated.

Before I came, I contacted some colleagues and asked them if they could project what was going to happen to the economy in this province. They said it was going to go down badly over the next decade or so. If that was the case, it seemed to be sensible for the faculty to get some understanding what was required. People were often in their own compartments within the faculty, peds group, maternity group, family nursing group and for a small faculty that didn't make a whole lot of sense to me. I spent time assessing the interactions of the faculty and the extent to which they had resource support--supporting things they wanted done. It was clear there was no agreed-upon mission within the faculty so I set about the process over that first year of inviting someone from outside the faculty to come in to facilitate us getting clear about what were our priorities and objectives. For example, if teaching is your first priority then how do we set those priorities? I needed some guidance from the faculty. That was over a bit of time so I could sense where the faculty was coming from, where the conflicts occurred, where the areas of agreement occurred. I took up teaching at this point in my responsibilities as I felt I ought to be carrying some teaching responsibilities.

I became involved at an institutional level and there was a tension that came to exist between the deans and the campus and the president of the institution who was coming towards the end of his term. During that time, around the executive council, it became increasingly the case that we were wanting a spokesperson. I was the one who got jettisoned off to see the president because if nothing else I entertained him. But, primarily, I became active at the institutional level because there was a balance in my attention to the core faculties and to the professional schools, and a lot of deans were more interested in their own faculty.

In terms of where professional nursing should be developed in this country, there are reasons for my commitment to the position of baccalaureate education for nursing that had nothing to do with my association with the institution--it had more to do with seeing what happened to children in terms of who cared for them--the knowledge and skill nurses had to care for them. So the linkage during those four years in administration was always back to my clinical practice, which I missed a lot. I felt a part of me was missing.

So my feeling was that, if you are a program leader, you have some responsibility to take your turn in administration on the one hand. On the other hand, I had the feeling that I was losing a major source of my own pleasure in working with children and students. There were a set of tensions then that operated all at the same time--a stranger in a strange land. Culturally, this is not my home province; culturally, it is not like the state where I last worked. It is a very different culture and being a woman in this culture was different. So there was an institutional set of priorities going on, my provincial work was a priority on my time, energy, and

thought and all of this influenced my time available with the faculty.

Simultaneously, the leaders from the other programs and I began a set of Saturday morning meetings. The purpose of which, on my part, was that we would come together somehow and figure out how we could share resources across the programs and to do something about the provision of degrees for people entering nursing. So that went on, but more importantly, several of my faculty colleagues began a process with representation from each of the sites to develop a curriculum structure and what now has become a [collaborative] degree nursing program. There were strengths at all program locations and maybe if we came together and admitted that none of us was doing the right thing then we would all benefit from this. So a lot of energy went into that in the later years that I was here.

Also at that time, I felt that we needed to assist the nurses in the area to have better access to distance learning courses and we developed many courses to meet that need. That was the kind of synergism that began to occur around the end of my four years. It was probably my second or third year at the institution that the executive council elected me to sit on the committee for the selection of the president. Now I am trying to balance my work between the provincial work that I was involved in, the faculty, the institution, (increasingly) work internationally and nationally, and continuing some of my research in the States. So there was a whole balancing act that was going on. My intention then (as I was coming up to the end of my term) was to step down from the program leadership position and to return to a faculty position to give some added depth to the department in terms of

experience or to set up my own consulting company again. We dissolved the company in the States when I came here. So I could have returned to a half-time teaching position/consulting position simply to demonstrate to the institution that there are other ways of hiring faculty and using faculty in working with the community. I happen to have skills that would allow me to do that. That was the trajectory I was on during the fourth year of my leadership; and I had informed the vice-president that I intended to step down. A number of the faculty were quite clear that I should continue in the position or I should be out of the position. There was a split in the faculty.

The present president had come by that time to the institution to take up his position and he asked if I would be a candidate for [a senior administrative] position and said that the committee had nominated me as a candidate. I was going to finish my term and return to a faculty position so for me there was a lot of tension as I had ended up on the short list and I said I am not interested in the job. There were very good candidates for the senior administrative position. They could do well without me for the position.

At this point, I started to signal my departmental senior administrative people, at least (because I figured it would be out on campus very shortly) that I was on the short list. Their reaction was quite negative--as though I was deserting my faculty. They had spent a lot of time and energy getting me trained. They told the president they were really ticked off at him and that he shouldn't appoint me to the position even if the committee recommended it. So the tension for me was on the one hand between the president, for whom I had developed great regard

as a president, and my concern at leaving the faculty where, in a sense, I was catalyst for the [collaborative degree program], for the distance learning program, for enhancing the research program and getting that up and running, for getting a number of my colleagues on a number of provincial and national committees, and for supporting a number of international conferences that we brought here. Although I was quite shocked by their response, like getting hit by a bus, I believed they would be just fine, thank you, but that was not the view of the faculty and there was a lot of uncertainty. So when the president asked if I would take up the position I said no, and I said the reason is because I felt there was too much uncertainty in the faculty, that we were just out of the gate with a number of issues and we were trying to get them sorted out--a very complex set of tasks that had to be managed.

The long and short of it was he persisted in terms of his view of what had to happen in the institution over the next five years. I think with some regret on my part I understood and agreed with what he was saying in terms of the larger institution, but I felt a real loss of two things. One, I was relieved to be going back not to my own teaching position and clinical practice and two, the freedom of the instructor, which is incredible compared to the leadership position. I knew I would be going to a job that was more restrictive, more time-consuming and further away from patients, and that I was losing, in addition, my teaching opportunities. I know that with students you just can't get called out of the classroom.

So it was a tension between that part of me which is in systems planning and design applications and the part of me that has been committed to creating a place for educated people to take care of

children, whether it is through distance modes or through a variety of ways of bringing institutions together in order to help students learn what's most important in caring for communities, home care, hospitals, and so on. In a sense that's the journey. It has been a journey in which a lot of my personal decisions have been set in the context of a fact that, until I was in this job, I would say that ninety-five per cent of my work as an instructor was not what anybody else in the world would call work. I had a really good time. When I moved into the area of coordinator in the States I really enjoyed that and it was fun to do. When I moved into the leadership position, about eighty per cent of what I did was not work. The twenty per cent of it became work. The rest of it isn't really work for me. It is a wonderful chance to work with [like-minded] people, with people around this campus, who really are (I think) remarkably committed in the face of sometimes poor morale, cynicism, dealing with the budget cuts and all those things. The thing that has kept me here and interested in education (and then in the administrative side) is just that people come together to make things happen.

So that at least gives you some sense of why I was leaving nursing. It is not unlike my move from the States to here. Moving from the program administrator to a senior administrative office had much more to do in the final analysis in that you are responsible for maintaining the systems within what you work--it is probably like you, Bob. There is a point when you say all right, I have work to do on that, there is certainly a number of us who can move into an administrative positions and probably be relatively competent at it. You are on the spot right now, so it is your turn to do it but what you lose in doing administration is the

playfulness that comes from working with students and patients.

In the transition, the president and I agreed that I would call in an interim leader and I asked her if she would return to the faculty. God bless her, she decided to do that. Since I was in and out of the faculty, I had set up a system of communications with the faculty which continued. I called the faculty together to tell them that I had made up my mind and to tell them I had agreed to take the new administrative position, to explain from my own vantage point why. I wanted to listen on the one hand to the pleasure of my colleagues and on the other hand to the very clear message that I shouldn't leave them. So during the last week or so, as I was moving out of the faculty office, a lot of my focus was on ensuring that the senior administrative officers would continue to support the faculty and students in terms of things we had put in place. I also had to move the interim program leader into place, to brief her on where I thought the major areas were that we need to carry on and to assure her that I would be backing out of it, I was turning the reins over to her, and I had no more responsibility for the faculty. Part of me was responsible as administrator in transferring the reins of decision-making and processes that were in place, so a lot of my time and energy went into that transfer.

With the faculty members themselves there was a portion of the faculty (one in particular) who went over and gave the president a blast about the fact she thought he was being destructive of the faculty by asking me to take the new position. Some of my faculty gave very clear negative feedback about the decision that I had taken to leave them. They saw that behaviour as being irresponsible--lacking in fairness, lacking in commitment to those groups that I chaired and worked hard

with--certainly they were the ones who really did the work--not me. So that was one set of responses. I think there was another part of the faculty who were probably relieved that I was going, because for several of the faculty, I had been instrumental in their choosing to retire because I felt it was time to move on. There were some people for whom that was a negative tension and for some people it was positive. There were people who for a variety of reasons were probably happy that I went. I think others of the faculty thought, "That one's gone. I guess we have to get a new one, but it is a real nuisance to find a new one."

With my support staff, I think we dealt with one another with a tremendous sense of loss. These people with whom I worked closely were important to the program--your senior administrator, or budget officer, or the person who manages the support staff, the administrative assistant--we became like a little basketball team--we were handing things off--playing together solidly. I think a number of the junior faculty experienced a tremendous amount of growth. I was concerned with mentoring (a word I hate) but it captures my concern about helping them build careers in research which they had little idea about until I came. Those skills were ones that I had brought to the faculty. So some of the junior and senior faculty were feeling a sense of loss around that.

My feeling was that the faculty was in good hands with the interim leader and that if they found the right program leader they had nowhere but the "sky" to go. I had every confidence that the faculty would move forward. In this faculty, as in other nursing faculties where I worked, some of the people are clinically-oriented, some people are administratively-oriented/teaching and some are more heavily invested in being

classroom teachers then clinicians. That hadn't been straightened out in the faculty. That tension had not been resolved and I felt a sense of loss regarding that.

So I felt, since I had made a lot of transitions in my career, the transition wasn't as difficult as leaving the States. I was in my last job for some time. Some of my very close friends and colleagues, you know people I had really loved and cared about, had died there and so that is where my heart was in terms of my personal self. Professionally I had also a lot of roots in the city where I had last worked. The departure from nursing was not for me as personally wrenching but it was a concern to the faculty and it was a legitimate concern. What it looked liked was--stay close to people during the last two weeks. The formality of having parties and celebrating that you have that job--but we are not celebrating that you are leaving us--but there was a formalization of a set of communications around the faculty about me leaving.

I think it made them feel easier to have someone familiar like the interim leader who was really loved by the faculty with real affection. She was a very different kind of person and she deserved that affection. That softened the bind for some, whereas with others, they were concerned that they might slip back and lose the things that they had really worked for. Because I am a pediatric nurse, most of my interest is in the fact that when you start with a child who has a chronic illness, your interest is helping them learn to care for themselves. I am not interested in looking after people; I am interested in them doing planning themselves or re-editing budgets themselves. As a program leader, I moved money from my office back to the faculty. As a program leader, I was interested in the

faculty, serving as a catalyst absolutely but supporting a lot of the initiatives. So that made it easy for me personally to walk away, because I believed the people can do really well on their own and I have a lot of confidence in them. They don't need me "is my feeling and I still feel that way."

I vaguely remember my last day. I remember the support staff wanted me to have my own chair. I kept stealing the secretary's chair because there was a big, big fluffy, executive chair in my office and I remember very clearly the support staff getting together and giving me that chair. They wanted to change the colour of it. I remember those things but I don't remember even the date I left. I have no real recall of it. I do recall the tensions between people in that last week or so and I remember my assistant with whom I worked most closely, helping move books and working together to move things. They were physically helping me move that last day and I do remember that. I said the moving people could do that and they said no they wanted to do it. They had these little carriages they were busy pushing around with my boxes of things. So I remember the last day being actually quite careful leaving the office and the interim leader had arrived and we had had an opportunity to work together so I remember feeling comfortable with leaving, other than the fact no one likes the fact of having some people annoyed with them.

But, I remember little incidents during the day with support staff or some of the faculty who dropped in to say next time they see me, it would be over in another office--I shouldn't forget I am a professor of nursing and those kinds of things. So there were messages both of connection

and messages of disconnection going on at the same time. Sometimes from the same person who was saying goodbye. A lot of the interactions I remember were with the people I worked with most closely who were trying to deal with what they called separation anxiety. I would probably call it the same thing, just a sense of loss--separate place, separate office. I wasn't excited. I didn't get excited. If I am going on a long trip, I don't get excited until I land on the other end. So that last day is a blur really in terms of what was going on other then tiny little pieces of it.

[So, why did I "move on?"]--the "why" was a combination of the president's considerable persuasion and my thinking/feeling that each of us has a responsibility to carry administrative work at some point during one's career. It was just my turn. Added to that was the fact that my education is in administrative and social services--so the student in me had (has) a marvellous opportunity to study a complex organization from yet another vantage point.

Story of Rose

1996-05-27

I chose nursing originally because basically at that time there was probably two professions for women--one was teaching and one was nursing. I was not good enough with kids so nursing was a good alternative for me. I liked working that way with people. In my family, my sister was a nurse but I don't know that really influenced me because I am sort of the tail-end of the family--they were eight or nine years older then I was. My family were supportive of my choice. I went into a nursing program, the only one I applied to, and went through without any major problems. During the program we moved from one hospital to a new hospital and there was the change from being relative autonomous as a student to being very closely supervised. So there was a sense of a loss of autonomy and that maybe threads throughout my story.

After I graduated, I worked in the same hospital for a year and a half on a medical floor. I went to the United States for a year and worked in a county hospital in an isolation unit which was a very interesting experience. The reason why I left my home was I had been engaged and the engagement had broken up. I just wanted to try something else and to get away from the situation. I worked for the year there. I would have had to take a training program in the United States at that hospital down there in order to get permanent registration as a nurse. I did not endorse the idea and I just decided I would come back to Canada.

So when I came back home, I worked for part of the year doing private-duty nursing. That was a good experience and I enjoyed it--just looking after an individual. Then after a short vacation I came back home

and worked on obstetrics. I left that position to go to university to do a teaching/supervision program. I took the teaching/supervision diploma and I don't know that I really had a focus either for teaching or administration. If there was a bent anywhere, it probably would have been more for teaching because I worked all the time with students. At that time, we didn't have too many aides--we had graduates or students working with us. Of the two, I would probably have been more interested in the teaching end of it. I don't know whether I could put my finger on any one influencing me as a role model. It was just that I liked the teaching role and working with the students, and I had had good teachers in the university and in the program.

I also did my advanced practical obstetrics course at the university. When I finished the courses, I came back home and worked general duty on obstetrics for a time and then took a position of head nurse on the same floor. What I really dreamt of doing when I was in the hospital was to teach obstetrics, but they had an excellent obstetric instructor and she was not in a position that she was ready to leave. When the nurse who had been in charge as head nurse was leaving, they opened up the position and I applied for it. It was a challenge in a sense because I working with people that I had been working with as a staff nurse. I was younger than 95% of them but I had my diploma, so that gave me an advantage. I applied and took the position because there was some changes that I wanted to see made. There were some things that I thought we could change for the benefit of the patients and some of the older staff would never have bucked the medical establishment to make those changes. I am sort of quiet and stubborn but there were changes

that I wanted to make for patients. That was to me more important than necessarily proving myself. I was able to get some of them initiated--mind you, over time. So I guess you would say it was an idealistic view.

I left the position of head nurse to go into a nursing program in my hometown. I had always liked teaching and it was an opportunity to get into a teaching position, although it was medical-surgical rather than obstetrics. So it was just a choice I made at that time, to go into teaching rather then the administrative end of the hospital, although I had enjoyed the administrative end of it. So I taught in general medicine in the nursing program.

Then I got married, and because my husband had two small children, I left nursing for a couple of years. I came back three years later to teach part-time in the same program. After discussing with my family and receiving good support, I went full-time in the program. When a position came up at another program, I took a teaching position there. I don't know why I left. I didn't have any bad feelings about working at the nursing program I was in but my program was going to close soon. So I went to the head nurse that I had worked with and talked to her about the position. She suggested that I go ahead and apply for it. I don't know whether I was the only applicant or what happened with it but anyway I got the position.

It was kind of an exciting thing to get into, the new program, at the ground level and having to plan our own curriculum. I was coming in with fellow people I had worked with. It was a challenge that looked like it would be interesting. We had a good time. So I taught for about twelve years. I shared some of the responsibility for teaching obstetrics towards

the end of that time. I liked obstetrics and was influenced by a head nurse on obstetrics when I worked there as a graduate. She was very stubborn in her demands that you care for a patient. If you didn't do the things that you were responsible for regarding patient care, you were required to explain yourself. But, what you saw in her all the time was that her first concern was for her patients. She increased my interest and I guess my involvement in obstetrics really stemmed from her example. She was a good role model and I tried to impress my students with the importance of caring for their patients.

Then the program [director] position came up and that was a three-year term which could be renewable. We looked at it as faculty members. We talked about who would do it and a lot of them weren't interested in it at that time for various reasons. I talked to those around me including my family and I felt I had support for the job. So when I decided I could swing it at home I applied for it. I kind of wanted to try it. I hadn't done too badly as a head nurse and I thought I would like to try the administrative part of the program. There was a little bit of fear and trembling when I applied because you never know how the interview committee will accept you. You are dealing with a committee of other department heads. We had some new conflict in the nursing program. We had had a very good leader at the administrative end of it but the faculty were feeling kind of neglected and battered. I thought that one of the things that I could do is I do care about the individuals that I work with. I thought maybe I could carry that attitude to the others and give them a sense of respect and recognition. It's probably not the best reason and it seems like you run into more problems with it. When I actually took over

the job, I can remember the day I walked in. I remember it was at the end of the spring term and I had all the admission selections for the fall on my desk, dealing with 300-400 applications--and that's not a small problem. I had done some of that before but never the fine detail of going through the files one at a time. That was a process that we changed in the program.

Basically, it was a reasonably good experience. There were some things that happened with the students and faculty which probably influenced my leaving because I got so that I didn't handle stress too well. As a [director] of a program you always get pulled in different directions by the students, faculty, and administration. During that time there was a lot of weight by the administration on me as an administrator, plus I was doing my master's degree, which I had to have in order to keep the position of program [director], so there were always things hanging on that. But, I enjoyed it. I took the master's program on a part-time basis and it was an excellent experience. I enjoyed it thoroughly.

There were some faculty members who became dissatisfied and unhappy with what we were doing with the communications as they came down from administration levels, which made the situation difficult to handle. There were also problems with some of the students, which was sort of an ongoing problem, and I probably made mistakes.

Probably the thing that gets me into the most trouble is that when it comes to dealing with individuals with problems, I tend to look at their side maybe more then I should. Particularly when I am dealing with students versus faculty. I had some real problems because usually (maybe wrongly) I would veer towards the student first, particularly where

the faculty member had been in this position before. So I was always tending to take the student's side first, which is probably not the wisest thing to do. You need to balance them both. So there were some problems which made it then very difficult to move ahead and to accomplish what we needed to do. We were planning for amalgamation with a university so there was that "dance" as well. I had a good boss fortunately, which helped a lot. He kept it balanced.

Some of the other things that bothered me again when you are dealing with another massive change in nursing I didn't like and I am not sure I like it yet. Part of the problem--one of the things that really angers me is the political "footwork" that you have to do between the various institutions. I have no time and no patience to do a political dance. So that was a very stressful thing for me because we were trying to create an effective collaborative program. You know the problems in that.

You know, when I was thinking about talking to you, one of the things that frustrated me and made me angry when my anger turned was in dealing with the numerous institutions. I have no patience for intellectual snobbery and I really felt often that there was a lot of it. Maybe the people didn't really mean that and maybe I didn't know them well enough, but that's the impression they left with me with. I didn't feel that there was any grounds for intellectual snobbery. All programs had some good and some bad. I didn't really feel there was a need to be setting yourself up in levels. We were all there to do the same job and I would have enjoyed that more if there had been that--you know accepting differences as differences not as being better or worse. It was just one of those things you know--how can I change them, but I couldn't.

I didn't have the time to build friendships. I was doing the master's, a job, and the family--I didn't have time.

One thing that was pointed out to me was the fact that somehow, in taking over the [director's] job (for me anyway) I didn't feel powerful enough to delegate some of the things that were dropped on my desk, so I ended up doing a lot of things that probably should have been kicked out to secretaries or other faculty members. Part of that also is conditioning and being busy and how you handle stress. Certainly, the master's program professors looked at my job description (as I saw it) and said you are crazy. This is not what you should be doing. But I didn't have a personal secretary for the office and there was no assistant so whatever was there you did. So there I was and I felt stress. Maybe if I had been more assertive I could have pushed more for changes there. I did make some changes in the student selection process. We did start to work with pretesting, so that we didn't select students who had problems with reading and those type of skills. We set up a remedial program before they actually came into nursing, which saved a lot of people dropping out of nursing. So there were those kinds of things that I did, working with faculty and people. It wasn't totally my baby. You know, I got to a point where you don't see the future or the future is such that you don't want to be involved in it. I am always really getting to that point but it was also making me very physically sick. There was no point in being sick over a job that I didn't have to be in. In as much as I have difficulty sharing things (I am more inclined to keep things to myself rather them explain them all over the board) but the family was always supportive. If I said I needed a break, or I needed this or that, there was not a problem

with their supporting me. Certainly, when it came to the final decision that I needed to be out, or I was going to be more low then I could cope with, they were with me and so was my boss.

In the second term of my [director] position, I stayed only two years because I was running into personal difficulties, so I left the leadership position. I went back to a faculty position, stayed in the faculty position teaching in the classroom and clinical area for two years, then I quit. I think I probably made the decision in the fall semester but because of you know, contractual things, I was there until the end of the winter semester, end of May, so they had three or four months to look for a replacement. I didn't have anything to do with choosing my replacement.

When I look back, I think to me it was just a different role in nursing student education. I was involved more with the assessment and selection process as well as disciplinary measures then I was in the actual classroom teaching. To me it was a different role. The leadership part--it is difficult to lead a group that has worked closely for many years. It has to be a relationship of collegiality, where we are working as equals together, not so much as one running out ahead saying come with me. I don't think that would have worked because they were individually very well-qualified. Mind you, that did have difficulties because I was the administrator--you know the pulls from above were sometimes heavy. We worked so long here. We hadn't had that much staff turnover, you know, it was a real tight group, if that makes sense. I wouldn't have seen it as me really pulling them around behind me and making change, but the change came from the group. So it was a type of group leadership rather than me as an individual.

I think of others that have done it, have done it differently but that is how I saw it.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION OF THE NINE STORIES

The purpose of this chapter is to interpret the stories of the nine nursing education program administrators. These stories provide an opportunity for the participants to explain why they chose to leave nursing positions during their career and their positions as a program leader and how they handled the leaving process of the nursing program leadership position. Interpretation of the stories provides insight into the lived experiences of the administrators.

Interpretation of the stories is organized under the following headings: success, influence of significant others on career changes, influence of job conflicts and stress, need for change and growth, and the leaving process.

Success and Its Influence of on Moving On

The notion of success is evident throughout the nine stories. Success in a position led most of the participants to consider future positions. While success is a reason for moving on to other positions, in some stories the participants did not use their success in a conscious way to get a new job. Because their personal history would be known by others, they were asked to apply for a position, either at a different institution or in some cases within the same institution. Success was interpreted under the following categories: opportunity, right place at the right time, no interest in being an administrator, intuition, job accomplishment, and change agent.

Opportunity

The stories of the nursing education program administrators

indicate that often in their careers they had an opportunity to take a new position. Some applied for a new position that became available for various reasons and quite frequently some were asked to apply for a position. Being asked to apply was the most frequent means among the nine participants. Opportunity seemed to focus on the future, achieving something that was in front of the participants to achieve. The participants did not dwell on the past, hoping that an opportunity would come along that would get them out of a present situation that they did not want to be in. In some stories, the administrators knew that they did not want to be in a position any longer yet did not make plans to move. Rather, when they were in such a situation an opportunity to move was often initiated by some one else.

Laura said, "if indeed I was going to have more opportunities in my career, then I couldn't pass up this opportunity". She believed that if she was to have more advanced and different experiences she could not reject the offer from her president to become a vice-president. She knew that she was successful in her role of nursing education program administrator and that she didn't have to leave that position, but after some considerable thought she decided to take the plunge and assume the more complex vice-president position. Laura knew she had the support of her family and the support of the president. She knew that it is not often someone has a vice-president's "job handed to them on a platter."

While Laura perceived that she had the ability to become a nursing education administrator and a vice-president, Sarah never perceived herself as a program administrator. Sarah was presented with

an opportunity to leave a teaching position to become administrator of a program, having been asked by one of her friends to apply for a leadership position. She said,

> The more I thought of it, and the more I was badgered by my old friend, it perhaps crossed my mind that perhaps it was an opportunity for me to develop further some of the potential that I didn't know I had.

There was doubt in her mind but her friend, by presenting her with an opportunity, provided a venue for her to leave her teaching position and become a program administrator.

Sarah was eligible for a sabbatical from the institution she was working for as a nursing program administrator. She decided to take the opportunity provided by the sabbatical to pursue her doctorate. She noted,

> I knew that if I didn't take a doctoral degree that my options would be limited. If I wanted to move into another administrative position, particularly at a university or if I wanted to teach in a university, I knew I would need to have a doctoral degree.

Since Sarah had been a program administrator for at least ten years, she knew that her ability to leave the position and move on would be dependent on her taking this opportunity to pursue further graduate education, so she did, and it in turn provided the opportunity for her to take the position of her choice.

Being successful and being the right person at the right time presented continuous career opportunities for Mary, who reflected,

> As I ponder the phases of my career I am reminded that I didn't

apply for one of the positions, not even the first one. Those opportunities did not come my way because of who or what I was. I was just the right person in the right place at the right time.

Mary was fortunate enough to be able to move on in her career by means of jobs presented which were each based on an opportunity, not jobs that she had to pursue. Mary believed that her success in moving on was based on the education that she took. Although she did not plan her positions, she did know that she should move from a diploma level of education to a graduate level of education in order to be able to change position. She also recognized the need to focus additionally on education and administration (since she liked both topics) along with the pediatrics and obstetrics. She emphasized that she made her own decision to move on to each of the jobs. Mary just wished that she had been encouraged to pursue education sooner than she did as she felt this would have allowed her to accomplish more than she did.

As with Mary, Louise was asked by others to move on to a job because of her ability to be successful at the job she was doing. Louise was asked to be an administrator for the first time by her supervisor when a vacancy became available due to departmental growth. Louise was not sure she could do such a job but she was encouraged to take the opportunity and was continually encouraged by a nursing consultant throughout that first administrative position. In another position, Louise was not satisfied with the work environment of the institution at which she was teaching and decided to "seek other opportunities". Louise found out how another nursing program in another province was handling nursing education and pursued a position at that institution. Fortunately

that nursing program was expanding and, she explains, "that provided job opportunity, and happily I was accepted".

Some of the participants chose to leave their professional careers during their children's early years. Sue, Rose, Louise, and Laura were all offered the opportunity to enter the nursing profession once again. Both Louise and Laura were offered positions that would be perceived as more complex than the ones they had left. Louise was "offered a position at another institution as one of the coordinators in the nursing program". Laura pursued an opening at a nursing program. She had taken the time to write and to take a doctorate program so now she was ready to pursue something complex as well as be a parent. The opportunity to be a program administrator arose and she believed that she had all the attributes required as stated in the job advertisement. Her thesis was well on its way towards completion and this burst of success convinced her to apply. She believed her successful skills in interpersonal relations, administration, and education, and the credibility of her nursing career provided her with the assets needed to be hired. Her perception was correct and she took the position of nursing education program administrator which would then fulfil her need to attain personal goals.

Betsy, Rose, and Anna all had opportunities to leave where they were working because vacancies they may or may not have been aware of came open. Betsy had her name passed on to a dean at a university as a likely candidate to teach in the dean's program. Betsy was asked to take the position and liked the opportunity to teach in the university environment. In a similar way, Anna was asked by her superordinate to apply for a position of leadership even though it meant leaving the

nursing program administrator's position. Anna explained, " I didn't have any interest in the job.... but I got a lot of pressure from the rank-and-file of the division." The move from nursing program leader to a higher, institutional leadership position was based on the opportunity presented by her dean's departure and she had good support for her application for the position. Anna had moved on from other jobs because of family reasons and encouragement from significant others so she was somewhat assured of support for her new position should she be recommended by the review committee.

After she had gone to university to pursue a baccalaureate level of education Mary was given an opportunity to attain a hospital unit leadership position when a good friend (who had worked on the same hospital unit) left the unit's leadership position. Here, the opportunity to move from a position to a leadership position on the same unit came about about not because of Mary's doing but because her friend moved on. No doubt Mary was perceived by her superordinates as being successful at what she was doing on the unit, hence she was given the opportunity to move to a leadership position even though she didn't pursue such a position. Mary became a nursing education program administrator not in pursuit of a personal career goal but because she was perceived as a successful unit administrator and nursing educator. Once again she was asked to apply for the position. She "was very surprised when ...[she] was asked by the president of [a] hospital to consider a move to [a nursing program] to become its [director]". She based her decision to leave her position and become the program [director] on her belief that she entered her graduate education with a

focus in nursing education administration and she might as well use knowledge and experience that she had. She had not planned to become a program leader but opportunity presented itself, once again without her pursuing it. So she took the position after a time of "turmoil" with a belief in herself that she could be successful at the position. The use of the word "turmoil" by Mary indicates that she had some difficulty deciding to leave the unit position and move to a more complex leadership position.

Like Mary, Josie was asked by a president of another institution to leave her nursing program leadership position and become the nursing program leader at his institution. This was the second time Josie had been asked by a president of an institution to move on to another position. Previously, her name had been passed on to one of the presidents by others who indicated that she was successful at running a program and should be considered. In this second case, she was known from having worked previously with the president at various meetings.

In Rose's case, she had opportunities to leave the various positions she was in based on a position becoming vacant which she thought she might like to try. She was working as an obstetrical nurse when the obstetrical head nurse left. Rose applied because she wanted to make some changes in nursing care that would benefit patients on the obstetrical unit. Rose noted,

> There were some things that I thought we could change for the benefit of the patients and some of the older staff would never buck the medical establishment to make those changes. I am sort of quiet and stubborn but there were changes that I wanted to

> make for [the] patients. That was to me more important than necessarily proving myself....So I guess you would say it was an idealistic view.

The new position offered an opportunity to implement beliefs she held about the role of the head nurse and how it could have an impact on patient care for the unit where she had worked as a nurse. Rose was working as an instructor when a teaching position opened at another institution. Both opportunities to move to another position were based on someone else moving on and her being hired based on her success at the position she was occupying when applying.

Betsy decided to leave her successful teaching position because she was pursued by a nursing faculty and recommended by one of her friends, a nursing program dean. Both parties convinced Betsy that she would have an opportunity to develop a newly-established program and take the program in directions that she highly valued. Betsy saw the opportunity to work with a faculty which was interested in a strong community faculty connection and in exploring new approaches to nursing instruction.

Betsy stayed as the program [director] and had no intention of pursuing further administrative career positions until the president and his executive committee asked her to move on to a higher executive position within the same institution. Betsy saw the opportunity to carry out her skill in "systems planning and design applications". With encouragement from her president and her peers Betsy took the opportunity to leave the [director's] position and move on to the higher, administrative position within the institution.

In a similar fashion, Louise was asked by her division dean to become the nursing program administrator, moving from a faculty instruction position because of an opportunity presented to her by the institution. Previously, Louise had been asked to fill in on a temporary basis as the nursing program [director] by the division dean and she had declined for various reasons, especially that she did not have her master's degree. When the nursing program leadership position became open once again, Louise's success as an instructor plus her education preparation at the master's level (she had completed her program during her time as an instructor at the institution) led the division dean to pursue her once again. Support from the dean and faculty allowed her the opportunity to accept the leadership position and leave the instructor position. Louise states that "she [the dean] had given me such good support and encouragement over the previous years that I agreed to take it on an interim basis". Opportunity presented itself and Louise responded but without the career commitment of permanently becoming the program administrator. Without the position having opened Louise would have continued happily teaching.

Opportunities abounded for Sue and she found herself in the position of leaving one job and having to consider two position offers made at the same time. Consequently, Sue had to ask one potential employer if she would release her acceptance of a teaching position so that she could pursue another opportunity. Fortunately for Sue, this was made possible and she was thus able to accept a teaching position that she believed exemplified the future direction of nursing education. Sue states "She was very good. She said to me, 'That is where nursing is

going and you should take this chance while you got it. I quite understand'". Without such an opportunity (two jobs available at the same time) Sue believes that her teaching career would have evolved in a very different way than it has.

Right Place at the Right Time

Some of the participants believe that their success and opportunities to move on to another position were related to being in the right place at the right time. They believed that if this perception was taken away there would be some difficulty in explaining how they managed to attain the positions they did. They believe that all factors fell into place for them, hence they were offered positions or they applied for positions.

Laura believes her career was more "accidental" than "planning". She states that "there really were very few people at the time that were presenting themselves first of all with the experience and second of all with the level of preparation" [that she had]. Since she was in the "city" where the job was advertised and available to take the position she was able to leave what she was doing to assume a nursing program leadership position. Laura believes that "jobs just seem to present themselves and the right circumstances have just been there", and she believes that being in the right place at the right time may or may not have been accidental but she didn't think that she had a significant role in "orchestrating" the positions she held in her career.

No Interest in Being an Administrator

Although being successful at their career positions was common with the participants, and opportunities created employment situations

where they would leave one position for another, lack of interest in becoming an administrator was common among the participants. Participants often found themselves in leadership positions but not wanting to head in that direction, and in some cases they wanted to leave the leadership positions when opportunity presented itself.

Sarah became a nursing program administrator but could not "envision herself in an administrative role" and she had "no interest in it" [the position]. Sarah as well as Laura Jean "did not set out with extensive career plans" that included administrative leadership positions let alone the leadership of a nursing program. Sarah, after attaining a doctorate, once again decided that she was not interested in staying on as an administrator and left the leadership position. Sue and Sarah had "no aspirations" to be a program administrator but got pressure from "others" or "friends" to leave their present positions. Sue states that she did not "see myself in an administrative role--personality-wise". Throughout Sue's story she frequently refers to her perception both before and during the program leadership position that she did not want the position, hence her desire to move on to the instructor position she had held within the program. She felt "pressure" from her husband and from the job because she "wasn't really sure that [she] was [at] the level [she]... belonged at". Sue also felt a need to leave the leadership position when she was at the "table" negotiating a new collaborative nursing degree program and was not "happy" with the way negotiations were going for her.

Much the same as Sue, Louise declared "vehemently --never!" to her institutional division dean regarding whether she would become the nursing program leader, that administration was not "her bag". Louise

refused offers to be program leader two more times because of her belief that a program leader should have at least a master's degree (which she did not have) and she "was convinced administration was not for [her]". Louise had been a coordinator once before in community health nursing and this position had aided her in the decision that she did not like administration. Although Louise eventually took the position, she states in her story that she "never planned on [her] part to go into administration--that much I am sure of".

The four participants mentioned above moved on from their positions to become administrators but they did so very reluctantly and without career planning.

Intuition

Knowing when to move on can be perceived as a thought or inner sense and Mary believes that she had "an inner-sense that it was time for [her] to go." Mary retired from her program administrator position without pressure "from anyone" and she is convinced that is was the right thing to do for herself and the best approach for the program.

Job accomplishment

Leaving a position because the position goals were accomplished and staying on any longer would not offer anything further was evident with a few participants. Laura believes that she was able to leave positions because she was "successful" at her job tasks and could offer a potential employer an opportunity to hire someone who had a reputation for success. Sarah had assumed the position of nursing program administrator when the program (in her view) had been struggling and believes that she took the program along a successful path and to a

"strong" level. Once she had accomplished that task she felt it "was the best time to leave." With the job successfully completed she had set out to do, she was ready to take on another position at another venue. In a similar way, Josie moved on from one leadership position to another because she believed that she had accomplished all that she could at that particular job. She describes herself as one who is "not a maintenance person. I cannot just sit and maintain things. It drives me crazy. I had to have something that I [would be] trying to accomplish". She makes a very strong statement that indicates her career goal was to be successful, change what she could, and then move on, looking for another position where she could achieve similar goals in a different environment.

Change agent

Sarah, Betsy, and Josie all perceived themselves as successful change agents. They all wanted to leave a position and demonstrate that they could exert influence over some things or other persons. Sarah believed that by leaving her staff nurse position and taking a baccalaureate degree in nursing she could "change the education system for nursing students". She thought that a higher level of education for herself would provide the opportunity to "do something about the exploitation of nursing students as they got their education". She wanted to alter the negative way hospitals treated nursing students. Throughout her story Sarah believed that she could be a change agent and hence it became one of her personal career goals.

By leaving the program administrator's position and returning to a faculty position Betsy believed that she could demonstrate to her

institution that there was a variety of ways of hiring and utilizing faculty. Betsy believed that she had the skills to be a change agent but realized that in order to do so she would have to leave her nursing program leadership position. Her plans to return to the faculty position never developed because she decided to take a senior leadership position with the same institution.

Josie took her first program administration position with the intention of making life "more wonderful" for staff and students. She believed that she could change working conditions within a program if she took a leadership position, and that principle became for her a "guiding light behind what [she] did" when she moved from one leadership position to another. For one leadership position of a nursing program Josie believed that she could help the program change and "reach a place" and level where they could "go on" working in an environment that would be conducive for faculty and students to grow as they should in an education environment.

Influence of Significant Others on Moving On

Without the support and encouragement of their significant others, the participants would not have moved on in many of the situations described below. All the reasons noted in the study for moving indicate that the participants had to have the support of the significant others. Significant others can include the participant's friends; family members, that is, spouse, parents, children; superordinates; supervisors; business partners; peers; mentors; faculty; and staff members. When asked to explain why they moved on in their careers, participants so often mentioned significant others as influencing reasons for moving on that I

have decided to interpret separately each significant other. There appears to be an importance given to each significant other so each is categorized to emphasize their importance to the participants. The category Family was identified most frequently as important by the participants while the following categories were placed together since they seemed of equal importance to the participants: mentors, supervisors, colleagues, and friends.

Family

Throughout the stories family members such as spouses, children, and relatives are mentioned as persons who influenced the reasons as to whether why the participant should or should not move on to another position, and for a few participants whether or not they should retire.

Time commitment was a concern for the participants. They were often concerned about whether taking on a new position would interfere with their family members and their family lifestyle. Laura, when accepting the nursing program leader's position, states that the idea of going back to work "was going to cause a big dilemma in my family....at that point in time" since she had been home with her only child for a few years. With support from her family she carried out the nursing program administrative position until the opportunity to move on to a senior leadership position within the same institution arose. Once again her family participated in the discussion about "time commitments, the demands of the role, and the travelling that would be involved". Laura knew that she had to have appropriate child care in the morning and that it would have been "just impossible" to undertake the role without the appropriate assistance at home. She did take the position and was able

to provide proper support at home.

In a similar fashion, Sarah confided in her family members before she left a teaching position to take on a nursing program leadership position. Sarah liked to talk to people that she "trusted", "confidants" like her mother and her oldest brother who she believed had "worldly wisdom and could help [her] with [the] decision" to move on.

In a somewhat different way, Sue conferred with her family about whether to leave the leadership position. She was not happy being a nursing program administrator for various reasons, one of which was the impact the position and its role was having on her family. Concerns such as frequent travel, home issues, and impact on her young children all convinced Sue to leave the leadership position and return to a faculty position. Her strong family values were more important to her than maintaining a leadership position. Anna also explained how she left her program leadership position because she did not want the travel, stress and other personal issues to affect her personal life. Anna also acknowledged that she had left a nursing position because her husband had taken a position at a new location which required the family to move.

Mary was influenced by family reasons when it came time to retire from her nursing program leadership position. She felt she could be of some assistance to the "extended family members" at this time in her life "if [she] were free from [her] professional duties". By having a goal to achieve with her family members, Mary was able to move on with a sense of direction and purpose emphasizing her extended family.

As with Laura, Louise left a nursing education faculty position when the birth of her first child was imminent. Throughout her career

Louise confided in her spouse and children each time she was ready to move on to another position. She believed that as each position would have an impact on the family, they should be part of the deliberations around accepting a new position. Even for retirement, Louise noted that her husband's health needs played a role in her timing of retirement. She knew that if she "was going to have some time in retirement to spend with him, [then she] should start it [the retirement] fairly soon" and she did just that with great pleasure.

Like Laura and Louise, Rose left a position to be with her children. When Rose returned to full time employment, when she applied for the nursing program administrator position and when she knew she had to quit that position, she conferred with her family regarding her reasons for moving on. She always believed that she needed their support to accept or leave a position.

Throughout the stories the participants stated that their reasons for leaving always focused on significant others, regardless of whether this was for support or just someone to whom they could explain their reasoning. Without this process, they may not have moved on.

Mentors, Supervisors,Colleagues, and Friends

While family significant others exercised personal influence over participants', mentors (an experienced and trusted adviser), supervisors, colleagues (faculty, staff, business partners, peers), and friends were seen by participants as more or less public significant others who also influenced reasons for leaving one position and taking on a new position and in some cases retiring from the nursing program leadership position. The participants frequently conferred with these persons in order to clarify

what they should do. Participants had great confidence in mentors, colleagues, and friends when it came time to solicit feedback about an option in their lives such as accepting a new nursing position or a leadership position, or even leaving the leadership position. Some credit these persons as the reason participants became leaders; they wanted to be like their role models when it came to leadership.

According to some of the participants, mentors were identified as those with whom they discussed the possibility of leaving a position and moving on to another position. Mentors were identified as someone whom the participant had worked with at one time or another and often still conferred with to discuss various ideas. In order to determine whether or not she should take a nursing program administrator position. Sarah visited a nursing program director in another province and this "one individual in particular has been a mentor to this day". Sarah indicates that she personally allows her mentor to influence her reasoning and help her to move to the "outer limits of possibility as far as [her] potential is concerned".

Two other participants, Josie and Louise, referred to mentors. Betsy indicated that she had a mentor as a new professor but did not like the term. Although the three did not attribute their moving on to the influence of mentors, they do attribute career influences to these mentors. Louise states that her mentor encouraged her to go to university to complete a nursing degree (which she did) and this activity influenced her career. Josie attributes her career administration skills to one supervisor who acted as a mentor for her. She noted that "He was a really wonderful man and he taught me pretty much most of what I know

about administration."

Participants also received positive encouragement from their supervisors to move on to further education, a new nursing position, a nursing program administrator position, or to another position after leaving the program leadership position. Louise explained how that her maternal-child nursing consultant supervisor encouraged her to go to university. Laura was encouraged by her supervisor to apply for a senior executive position within the same institution and she appreciated the confidence that her supervisor had in her. Without this confidence she may not have left her program leadership position at that time. Betsy credits one of her supervisors as the "reason [she] stayed in nursing....She was a wonderful role model". In Louise's case she probably would have retired still an instructor if it had not been for her division supervisor, who persistently pursued Louise to become program administrator more than once. As Louise had completed her master's degree and the program leader position was vacant, Louise acknowledges one of the reasons for her acceptance of the leadership position was the persistence of her supervisor, without which she would neither have taken the position nor applied for the vacant position. Louise states that "she [the supervisor] had given me such good support and encouragement over the previous years that I agreed to take it [the leadership] on an interim basis".

Rose sought the input of her supervisor when she was thinking about leaving her nursing staff position. She consulted with her head nurse regarding a teaching position which she did attain. Rose also had asked for and received the support of her program supervisor when she

decided to leave the program leadership position, indicating in her story that without this support she is not too sure what she would have done regarding moving on.

Although a mentor and the supervisor was mentioned by only some of the participants, these participants did attribute some of the reasons for moving on to the positive support they received from the mentors or their supervisors. If they had not received such encouragement they probably would have in some cases not moved on to the next position in their career.

Colleagues and friends were sought out by the participants in order to share thoughts and concerns about seeking a new position. Regardless of whether the participant was a staff nurse, an instructor, or a program leader the participant thought well enough of colleagues and friends to discuss with them their reasoning for leaving a position and the possibility of taking on a new position. Even for those who retired, that is Louise and Mary, colleagues played a role in the timing of their retirement.

Throughout their careers, participants conferred with colleagues and friends. Sarah was contacted by an old friend and former boss to accept a leadership position in another province. The more her friend "badgered" her, the more she was convinced to take the position. Sarah also conferred with "individuals [she] felt had some worldly wisdom" and who could influence her decision to become a program leader. She also believed that she "tended to move on invitations to come and therefore others have had a lot to do with my growth and development and my different milestones in my career".

Sue, Betsy, Josie, and Mary all had convincing support from their colleagues and friends to try something new--a new position--to "go for it". Sue had "good back-up" colleagues and therefore decided to try the program leadership position for one year. Betsy credits her teaching friends with persuading her "to take a look at the program", asking colleagues across the country what they knew about the institution she was considering. Both friends and colleagues influenced her and gave her reason to accept the program leadership position. Josie attributes the attitude of one colleague (who told her "if you don't apply you won't get it") as the person who convinced her to apply for her first program leadership position. When Josie was somewhat frustrated with her campus [director] leadership position it was her friends who said to her "go for it, why not, do it" so she applied for the position and was accepted as program leader. Once again, Josie was convinced by her friends that the possible move would benefit her and she listened to them. Mary was influenced to become an instructor by one of her friends who she perceived as a good role model at that time in her career.

Rose, Louise, and Anna were reluctant to apply for or accept the invitation to be a program leader but their colleagues and friends were behind them and they all became program leaders. Louise, who did not want to pursue the program leadership, received overwhelming support from her colleagues as expressed in a faculty poll gathered by her supervisor. This was a good enough reason for Louise to take on the position even though it had been in her mind only for a short period of time. Rose talked to her colleagues and felt she had support for her to apply for the position. Similarly, Anna had "two or three" of her

colleagues approach her and try to talk her into applying for a leadership position. She states that "I thought if people like that think I can do this job they I will at least do them the credit of applying and interviewing". Anna did take the leadership position.

Throughout the stories, significant others such as family members,mentors, supervisors, colleagues, and friends all played a role in convincing the participants that they were capable of assuming a new position. That they had significant others' support now and in the future was one of the participants' reasons for moving on. Without this support, the participants probably would not have taken on the new positions that they did or, for two participants, retire when they did.

Influence of Position-Related Conflicts and Stress on Moving On

Some participants explained that they left a position because of a variety of conflicts with colleagues, supervisors or with institutional values as expressed by colleagues or supervisors. Some explained that they left because of conflicts that led to stress within themselves. The stories indicate that these conflicts developed over a period of time (varying from months to years) but as perceived by the participants, the end result was that the conflicts became reason to move on. The stress reaction was so pronounced for some participants that they decided the only way to reduce it was to leave the positions.

Interpersonal conflict includes conflict with other persons such as supervisors, students or colleagues, while organizational conflicts include those between the participants and the beliefs of a union and/or institutional beliefs. Power conflicts include conflict between the participants' leadership role and the struggle they had with persons in

their own organization or other organizations who had a defined level of organizational control and therefore power over the subordinate. Stress refers to the uncomfortable reaction the participants identified within themselves when conflict arose for any reason or from any source. The term tension was also used to describe a feeling of discomfort of one participant as she interacted with her colleagues, groups, and supervisors.

Interpersonal and Organizational Conflict

Interpersonal conflict was mentioned often by participants as a reason for leaving a position either before another position was found or to accept a new position. Organizational conflict was mentioned by some participants as a reason for moving on. Sue explained that she was not happy with the way events unfolded for her when she was negotiating with other program leaders on the design of a new collaborative nursing degree program. She states she often "felt a personal slight at the table" and she did not like this feeling. Sue wanted to represent her faculty as a leader and do the best she could at the negotiating table for her faculty. She explained, "They wanted to put a whole new plan on the table and I thought that would be a personal slight to my faculty". She went on to explain that [she] "asked that that not happen [and] [it] happened anyway". The feeling of not achieving what they wanted at the curriculum design table was creating an uncomfortable interpersonal conflict for Sue among her faculty, herself and her program leader peers. She was also unhappy with the "extra layers" that she had to report to compared to other program leaders she was dealing with at the curriculum design negotiating table, and she credits this "layering" in her organization as

CANADIAN THESES
THESES CANADIENNES

MORRIS, ROBERT FRANCIS
NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAM
ADMINISTRATORS: MOVING ON

ISBN 0-612-23102-X
NQ-23102

having caused organizational conflict among her and her program administrator peers. She explained, "I felt that I had to go up so many layers that the others didn't have to do or that they seemed to be in a position of power in their institution". Sue believed she had the organizational conflict of loss of authority as she explains "My position was one of responsibility but not authority". Hence, this difficulty with her line authority leaders created conflict for her and added to her reasons for leaving her leadership position.

In a similar way Mary mentions that she had organizational conflicts with some of the faculty union members and their demands at the negotiating table. Mary explained, "Their [the union] demands for changes in a number of clauses were incompatible with the sound education philosophy to which we [the nursing program] were committed" and this conflict was given as one of the reasons for Mary to retire from her program leadership position. Mary mentioned only one conflict as a reason for moving on during her career.

Similar to Mary, Louise found interpersonal interactions with union members, their contract demands, and some of the administrators she worked with during difficult labour relations events as incompatible with her beliefs. Mary did not want to work in an environment where she was uncomfortable due to constant interpersonal and organizational conflict between persons involved in labour relations issues. Even though she was uncomfortable with the conflicts Louise gave notice of her resignation in the fall semester and then stayed until the school year was complete.

Somewhat different from Mary and Louise, Josie experienced

interpersonal conflict with a few of her supervisors during her career. She states that she has "shut out" most of the memories from one of the positions since it seemed the "worst job" she ever had. A feeling of lack of "support" and a "betrayal" by one of her supervisors encouraged Josie to look for another position as soon as possible after these stressful interactions with her supervisor occurred. Although she does not go into great detail as to the nature of the interpersonal conflict with her supervisors, the events stated in her story are significant enough to be a reason for moving on in two different situations.

Interpersonal conflict was perceived to have occurred among the leaders, faculty, and sometimes the students, and for some of the participants conflict motivated them to leave their leadership positions rather than to continue dealing with it. Rose, Anna, and Sue mentioned difficulties with their colleagues and sometimes their students often concerned them. They did not enjoy this aspect of leadership. Rose mentioned, "Some of the faculty members became dissatisfied and unhappy with what we were doing which made it difficult to handle" and she also notes, "there were also problems with some of the students which was sort of an ongoing problem that we had". Rose found she often had to take the side of the students, which was seen as conflict-provoking by the faculty. Anna found that she was often in "no mood" to deal with the issues arising from the faculty within the department. She felt that the conflict generated from these issues was enough to encourage her to move on, in this case away from a leadership position to a faculty instruction position within the same program.

Discomfort with unpleasant interpersonal interactions and conflicts

with various beliefs held by the unions or the organizations in which they worked was not what the leaders wanted for their role. They perceived that interpersonal and organizational conflicts which were present on a fairly regular basis comprised good enough reasons to leave the program leadership positions that they occupied.

Conflicts Involving a Power Struggle

A power conflict between participants and those in supervisory positions was identified in a number of their stories. Those who recounted such struggles were uncomfortable with them and perceived that this type of conflict gave them reason to leave their positions.

Sue, Josie, Rose, and Anna all referred to power struggles with those organizations where they worked. Sue was not pleased with the level of her leadership position within the institutional organization. Comparing herself to other program leaders and their "position of power in their institutions" created a power conflict for Sue regarding her decision-making ability for the new collaborative nursing degree program she was negotiating with other program leaders. Sue had to take the decisions made at the table to supervisors above her in the organization, which she considered an added burden she did not enjoy. She believed that she held only a "limited degree" of power not the power she was told she had. Rose maintained similar beliefs toward interactions with other nursing programs and was angered by "the political footwork" she had to perform between those programs and her institution. She elaborated, "I have no time and no patience to do a political dance". This type of power conflict played heavily on Rose during her short stay as a program administrator and she felt the stress it created within her.

Anna and Josie perceived both loss of power and "politics" as present among them and their colleagues or supervisors. Both became disillusioned with the "politics" being played by others and with the erosion of their leadership base caused by such conflicts. Josie believed that one of her supervisors did not support her and she outlined the situation, "I remembered every step that he had made to prevent me from getting this job. I thought this was one more step of not supporting me in my position". She left her leadership position because she did not like the lack of support she received.

When Anna recognized that "politics" had started to come into play in her nursing program, she left her leadership position. She did not want to deal with such conflict and issues at this time in her career.

Stress

Some of the participants identified stress as present during their various positions, especially program leadership positions. Sources of stress identified included conflicts (mostly with others in their organizations) and the role requirements of their leadership positions.

Sue believed that the program leadership position was an "untenable position for anyone to be in" because of pressures and demands from faculty and administrators. She found the requirement of always having to go to a number of individuals for approval very "frustrating" and this stressful activity became one of the reasons she left her program administrative position.

Betsy identified in her story a "set of tensions" that often gave her reason to leave various positions she had in her career. In one position she identified that "a set of tensions" were present in her use of her "time,

energy and thought" and this influenced her time with her colleagues. She also found "tension" between those job requirements she wanted to meet and those that others in the organization wanted her to accomplish. Tensions were present for Betsy not in the form of stress but in the form of uneasiness with how her job was perceived. As Betsy had to deal with them somehow, she chose to move on as the best way to alleviate some of those tensions.

Similar to Sue, Josie described some of her interpersonal conflicts as being very stressful and also felt that there was some redundancy to her daily leadership activities in one position. She did not like to call it burnout but thought that it may have been that for her. Twice she decided to accept other leadership positions rather than stay in positions which generated so much stress for her.

Rose said that she did not handle stress very well. Because she needed to carry out the numerous leadership and home roles, she "felt stress" and decided to reduce its level by leaving the program leadership position.

Conflicts, stress, and tension between other persons and organizational characteristics or goals was common in the careers of some of the participants. Subsequently, participants reached levels of intolerance to these conflicts and stress and decided to move on rather than continue experiencing the outcomes of these difficulties.

A Need for Personal Growth and Challenge and its Influence on Moving On

Throughout the stories, the participants explained they often believed that during their careers they needed to experience personal

growth and a new challenge. Even though participants moved on to new positions for other reasons, they also cited the need for a more complex position, or to go back to school, or to take on a new challenge, even if the challenge comprised a similar type of position at a different institution. The participants were aware of the changing education requirements for nurses particularly those in nursing education. Participants used personal words to explain their needs throughout the stories, hence the theme of a need for personal growth and a new challenge. All the participants explained the need for further education as a reason for moving on in their careers.

Personal Growth Through Education

Through out the stories the participants indicated that they wanted to pursue further education in order to meet personal needs. The education courses, programs and levels of programs the participants entered varied but all focused on nursing education in one way or another. The education program that they were associated with or thought they would like to be associated with were changing and instructors were required to pursue further education.

Laura and Sarah explained that they personally felt the need to pursue further education. Both left positions to pursue undergraduate and graduate studies at the master's level. Laura pursued a doctorate after "being at home for four years" while Sarah decided to attain a doctoral degree while still a program administrator and eligible for a sabbatical.

Laura explained that she wanted to "enhance my abilities to take on different roles and to keep myself enthused in what I was doing". After

completing her baccalaureate in nursing, Laura said that she was not interested in accepting a job similar to the one that she had left, so she immediately "decided" to continue studies for a master's degree. Once she had a diploma in nursing education, Sarah decided that she "needed to know more about nursing and nursing education" so she commenced work towards a baccalaureate in nursing.

For Sarah it was the sense that "once again, I was lacking. I didn't have a global perspective on health and I sensed that my nursing students in the university had more awareness of the world than I did". She left her position to seek knowledge about the world by taking a position in a Third World country.

Mary, Sue, Josie, Louise, Betsy, Rose, and Anna all pursued further formal education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Some participants started with a baccalaureate in nursing but all noted above pursued a graduate level of education at the master's level.

Betsy left a teaching position and pursued a master's degree in nursing because of her desire to learn more about "what is care about, and how do you study it, and how do you help students to learn". She was motivated to leave her faculty position and return for doctoral studies because she became frustrated with how hospitals cared for children and wanted to learn how to alter the health care system in order to improve the care of children.

Louise did not leave her full-time instruction position to take her graduate level studies. Instead, she participated in an outreach program and completed a "feasibility study" on baccalaureate nursing education at her institution. Louise knew that, with the changing requirements for

registered nurses, it would be an advantage to have baccalaureate nursing education within her institution rather than to continue having diploma graduates relocate to a city where a degree in nursing was offered. Louise did not plan to become a program leader but with the completion of her graduate studies and her leadership experiences, her need to learn ended up leading her into an unplanned leadership position.

Rose left her clinical staff position to return to school for a diploma in teaching and supervision, which at the time was an alternative route to enter teaching in nursing programs. She did so because she "just liked the teaching role and working with students". Rose completed a master's degree program on a part-time basis while she was program leader, a qualification which she states "she had to have in order to keep the position of program [director]". She is pleased with her graduate studies and considers them to be both an excellent experience for her and important to her career because they allowed her to try the leadership position.

Anna and Sue both utilized the availability of a sabbatical program to return to school to complete graduate studies at the master's level. Anna had a "need to get back and stimulate the mind" whereas Sue wanted to expand her expertise in curriculum development. Both took educational administration theory classes in their graduate programs but not with the intention of becoming program leaders. Mary also returned to school for a diploma in teaching and supervision because she found that she liked to "explain the 'how' and the 'why' of nursing actions to the students, staff, and parents". After teaching for a while Mary decided to

complete her baccalaureate and her master's degrees because she perceived a need to keep current as the developments of nursing education required nursing educators to pursue levels of education higher than a baccalaureate degree. Mary did take educational administration courses in her master's program but she did not take them with the intention of becoming a program administrator.

Josie completed a diploma in nursing education in order to gain further knowledge for teaching students. After some experience at teaching she completed her baccalaureate nursing degree because she perceived that to be the basic requirement for teaching nursing education. After a few years of teaching and some program leadership experience Josie completed her master's degree in order to learn more about how students learn.

All of the above participants completed nursing education programs after their diploma registered nurse program except for Betsy, who graduated from a baccalaureate program. Then they all pursued further education because of a need to develop further knowledge based on what they liked to practice or teach. None of the participants left a position to go to graduate school in order to become a program leader although some took educational administration courses.

Personal Growth and Challenge

Throughout their careers, all of the participants changed positions to satisfy the need to personally grow in experience and to seek out new challenges associated with accepting a new position. In summarizing her career, Laura explains in her story that she needed to change jobs because she would lose interest in a position once she mastered it,

saying that "she found herself getting bored and perhaps actually not even doing as good a job because of that". Laura entered nursing education and doctoral studies, finding that both provided the type of challenge she appreciated. She states that she "needed to be doing something "more". Laura moved away from nursing education leadership to the position of a senior executive officer and she concludes that "It's something that I just needed to take on"--another challenge for Laura in her career.

A challenge is also what Sarah wanted after she completed her doctoral studies. She decided to leave her program leadership position because as she noted, " I wanted more and I wanted a challenge". She knew that if she stayed at her administrative position much longer she would lose the expertise which she developed in her doctoral program. As she explains it "if you don't use it you lose it" and this simple summation of one of her beliefs helped to provide her with a reason for moving on to accept a new position and a new challenge.

Anna, Betsy, Josie, and Louise all explained that at one time or another they had changed jobs because of the need for a new challenge, a new perspective in their lives, or a more complex position. Josie applied for an acting [directorship] "more as a symbol" to senior administration that she was willing to take on a new and more complex administrative challenge--she ended up with the position. Louise decided to take the advice of her supervisors and accept a nursing administration position, mostly to attempt something new in her career. After a year, the challenge that she expected did not meet her needs and she realised that she did not like administrative work. This comprised her

prevailing attitude until she became a nursing education program administrator.

Anna reluctantly accepted the advice of colleagues and applied for a senior leadership position, one that she now realizes led her into new challenges and subsequently met her need for constant growth and personal change. Betsy was influenced by others but came to the conclusion herself that she liked the ideas presented to her in her job interview by a new institution, seeing the opportunity for new challenges. She believed that she would be able to use her knowledge in systems management and nursing care to create a new challenge for herself.

Although the need for growth and challenge was not mentioned by all the participants in their stories, most moved from one position to another during their careers expecting a new challenge and expecting that each new position would meet their needs for personal growth in knowledge and experience.

Leaving the Leadership Position

During the storytelling, the participants were asked to explain how they handled the leaving the nursing education leadership position. This time was defined as from the time they decided to leave the nursing education program administrators' position until the last day in the position. Some felt comfortable to elaborate on the details while others only mentioned the process in a few sentences. My interpretation is based on what they said with very few questions or any prompting from myself. Some saw the process in great detail and remembered such while others were either not willing to share much information or really never perceived the process as memorable. In some situations the

program leader did not leave the institution and instead returned to the instructional position she occupied before becoming program leader. For them the leaving process was minimal in nature. For some the leaving process started in the fall semester of the school year with an announcement to their supervisors that they would not be returning the following school year so the leaving process had some sense of remembrance for these participants. The following categories have been developed to answer questions about the leaving process. The first category is the caring attitude shown by the behaviour of the participant toward others or the goals of the institution. Second is closure, or the process they personally went through during the period before the final day.

Caring Attitude

A caring attitude by participants means that they attempted to assist others including colleagues (CNA, 1996, p. 3) or to support the goals of the organization so that gain resulted from the participant's behaviours or statements during leaving period, which ranged from months to semesters. The stories told by the participants reflect how they treated their colleagues and supervisors. A caring attitude shown by the participants was interpreted by myself as an advantage to the participant.

Each participant handled the leaving period differently but all had some variation of a caring attitude even if they did not specifically state it as such in the text of their story. Even by their notification time-line they all had shown concern for the nursing program's or institution's planning needs.

Laura had the opportunity to move within her institution but she

still cared about the goals she had set for the program and whether they would be achieved if she left it. She was not sure that she wanted to leave the program leadership position, indicated by the explanation she gave when she said, "The institution would allow that six-month time frame from their point of view as well. If things weren't working out then I would go back to the nursing program". She also had the administrators agree that no recruitment would occur until the six-month trial period was up. This satisfied her need for security and her ability to accomplish those program goals she had set. Laura did take the position and stayed in it for some time. She also had given a team within the nursing program the opportunity and time to learn the required program administrative responsibilities during this six-month period. She took the time to be involved with the team on an as-required basis since she highly valued this approach and stated that it provided a "sense of comfort more then pride" for her. Laura also believed that her major concern upon leaving was to "leave the administration situation in the most capable hands that I could find" and to be supportive of successors between her announcement and departure. She was concerned that they comprehend that her leaving "had nothing to do with them" and everything to do with her personal goals.

A successful program was valued by Mary and she wanted the newly-designed [collaborative baccalaureate] nursing program to be successful. She spent a considerable amount of time and "thought" in deciding to retire from the program leadership position and from active nursing. Mary cared that her successor should be given enough "lead time to understand and assume ownership" of the program before she

retired.

Mary also demonstrated a caring attitude towards her staff and colleagues, requesting that her supervisor not inform anyone in the institution until she could first verbally inform her management staff and then her staff and colleagues of her intentions. Mary valued this need for appropriate and respectful communications from the leader rather than communications through the "grapevine".

At leaving, Betsy experienced a "sense of loss" because she and her support staff had worked so closely as a team. She also felt a need to stay "close to the people during the last two weeks" to ease her transition of leaving the leadership position. Fortunately, Betsy was able to have a former program leader act as program leader on an interim basis till a new leader was found. The idea of bringing back the former leader "who was really loved by the faculty with real affection" was a caring activity by Betsy. In explaining the last few days and weeks, Betsy remembers the good-byes from the staff, and considers this a fond memory in the leaving process even though she was just moving across campus to another building and a different position.

Similar to the other participants, Josie cared enough to inform the institution supervisor and her staff and colleagues well in advance of leaving that she would not be returning the next year to be the program administrator. She explains that "I wanted them to know so that the search for a new leader could start as soon as possible" and the faculty could prepare themselves for the type of leader that would best benefit the program.

Like Mary, Louise had reached a point in her career where she

wanted to retire as she had family goals to achieve. In order to prepare the program for a new leader, Louise chose to retire at the end of the school year, giving the supervisor and faculty two semesters' notice. Louise acknowledged that "I felt it was crucial that they know well in advance and be prepared....I felt it was the best collegial thing to do".

Rose, Anna, and Sue all gave a considerable amount of notice that they were leaving their program leadership positions in order to benefit their institutions' ability to find a new leader. All three stayed within their institution and were available for assistance, if required, for the new leaders of the nursing programs.

A caring attitude towards faculty, staff, and organization is not a requirement when leaving a leadership position but the participants were cognizant of the need to benefit the programs they were leaving and the persons associated with these programs. Some explained in detail how they cared for others when leaving while others were rather brief but all the participants took the time to make sure the goals of the program and the institution were not adversely affected by their departure from the leadership positions.

Closure

All the participants explained in detail or very briefly that they had some sort of closure. They were aware of the need to close their leadership position in a way that met their needs as well as the needs of their colleagues and the institutions. Every participant told her supervisor, staff, and colleagues in an appropriate formal way. Many participants stayed at the institution where they worked, some moved on to faculty teaching positions, a few retired, and others took on senior

executive positions. One participant left the institution and moved on to another nursing program leadership position.

Throughout the stories, participants explained the need to inform various persons that they were leaving their positions and most did so up to two semesters before departure. A few gave two to three month's notice but this occurred in the spring semester so appropriate persons would have enough time to find a replacement for the beginning of the fall semester. Some participants described the last few days with their support staff or how they left that last day but not all gave significance to the last day while telling their story.

Anna explained that she had approximately four months to prepare her colleagues for the task of running the program and finding a new leader. During that time, she worked with the soon-to-retire dean for "about three months" to learn about the new position she was about to start. She began to "wean" herself from the intensity of what it meant to leave nursing. After about a year she underwent what she calls a "complicated" closure process because she still participated in some of the nursing program collaboration meetings. She knew she had to "gradually wean" herself of that role as she could not continue to do the job (participation in the collaboration meetings) and be a senior executive. Anna explained that when she occasionally goes into local hospitals and encounters a nursing instructor with students she has an emotional moment of loss because she misses the instructor role. In order to sever the ties and bring closure to her former role, Anna moved her offices away from her former department and consciously accepted the fact that she was no longer part of the program.

Laura had six months to prepare herself and her colleagues for departure from the leadership position but closure continued into her next senior executive role. In order to achieve closure, she took the opportunity to form a team to manage the nursing program which would allow each of the team members to "gain additional experience" by taking a segment of the leadership role and function as a "program administrator in the decision making regarding that aspect of their function". She noted that they were "quite enthusiastic about" the idea.

While acting as a senior executive, Laura (with responsibility for the program as part of her line authority) allowed the team process to continue for some time before a new leader was chosen. Her tactic of using the group leadership method was based on the belief that she was "leaving the program in a fashion where it could proceed and progress along the lines it was moving" which she had planned for the program when she was its leader. Laura was able to have a management team function as she wished which then allowed her to "maintain a clear cut between [her] engagement at the program and [her] present position". The choice of a management team option was successful for Laura in order to bring about closure to her nursing program leadership position.

Sarah, Rose, and Sue indicated in their stories that they did not or chose not to spend any time influencing or helping their colleagues find a new leader. Sarah had worked with the new leader before but did not provide an orientation before she left her leadership position. Rose and Sue moved from the leadership role to the instructor role within the same program but did not spend any time with the new leader.

Josie, Betsy, Mary, and Louise spent a minimal amount of time

either with the new leader or in the process in choosing the new leader. They all believed that this minimal time was beneficial in helping them achieve closure before they moved on to their next positions.

The last day on the job was remembered in detail by some and not by others. Those who remembered explained that they spent time saying goodbye to their colleagues and packing books. The last day was memorable because of various feelings that it evoked. Some were "sad" and had "mixed" feelings about moving on, some were "nervous" about their new positions, and one said she was not "excited" but felt a sense of "loss" at leaving. Louise summed up her feelings about retiring by explaining that "this is a whole piece of my life that has come to closure. It was a bit like closing a chapter".

Closure was necessary for the participants but at levels that varied by participant. Only some had the desire to help the new leader while others did not mention it in their story. Closure for some lasted well after they had left the leadership positions for a variety of personal reasons which were not always clearly explained. Some found leaving the leadership position difficult while others were pleased to be leaving a job that they did not enjoy all that much. Whether they enjoyed the position or not, most provided support of some kind to the new leader and their colleagues to ensure a successful transition between leadership. I think this value reflects the need for good order in the participants, yielding a personal reward if all goes well.

Themes

Two strands of themes weaving through the stories explain why the participants decided to move on: those connecting individual career

stories and those connecting understanding and experiences concerning administration.

The first strand includes themes of success, choice, chance, opportunity, and influence of significant others.

Success was ever-present in the attainment of the positions held by the participants; by being successful the participants gained choice, taking chances whenever an opportunity was presented to them. They were perceived by others (and they thought of themselves) as being successful except when evaluating their nursing program leadership positions. At that time many used success from previous positions as an underlying theme to support the reasons to leave program leadership positions.

Choice refers to the perception that participants had choice--to turn a position down, to not seek a position, to accept a challenge and thus stretch their capabilities. These choices were based on a strong thread of career success. Participants felt free to seek those positions which matched their needs and didn't seem to see themselves as identified or caught by the status of their present position. They had a sense of freedom to move on.

Chance refers to being in the right spot at the right time, being identified by others for positions not considered, or being asked to take positions without having to consider either moving or applying.

Opportunity refers to the way mentors both created places for participants to grow and encouraged them to consider accepting challenges. Either faculty and senior administration recognized their potential and sought them out or participants created opportunities for

themselves by seeking new challenges.

Significant others played a major role in allowing participants to leave one position for another. Throughout their stories participants made frequent references to this role in their reasons for leaving one position for another. Without this encouragement and influence of others, and in some cases the originator of the idea was some one else, many of the leaders would have not moved on to new positions. While holding positions, significant others often became a source of disagreement for the leaders regarding personal beliefs and goal achievements. This conflict (which is discussed later) became a major reason for leaving a position.

The second strand contains themes of personal and program challenges, and position-related conflicts. Program leaders saw themselves as leaders whose task it was to bring faculty together. Many were excited about their positions because of intrinsic program potential. They used this platform as a basis for development of a supportive, cohesive, and energetic group of faculty and thus an excellent program. Most of these women had strong ties to the work performed by their units and many regretted not being able to retain their own clinical or teaching skills. They defended the work as part of their concerns rather than focusing on the administration of the resources. The success of personal challenges during their career jobs led them into positions that were often more complex and more interesting than the positions they held previously.

The ability to work with others and gain their support was essential because personnel issues were the most difficult to manage. Those who

had cohesive staff groups sometimes saw them collapse once curriculum work was fully implemented. They had more difficulties dealing with conflict given their orientation to the group as a whole. This was a source of stress for some participants and thus a legitimate reason to move on. For some, the problem wasn't dissension among their own staff as much as lack of support from their superiors. Unable to garner senior executive support, these nursing education program leaders recognized the perils of continuing in the position and they moved on.

Administration became more complex, especially in senior levels of institutional administration, where the focus was on coordination of programs rather than working with single curriculum issues and political interaction among directors was an integral part of the work. Those program leaders who worked with external groups often had their first taste of organizational politics during various negotiations and were left disillusioned by the experience.

Knowing when to leave is an essential survival skill for nurses and nursing education administrators. At times the departure was for stress reduction, sometimes because of heavy workload and difficult decision-making, while at still other times the job was progressing well but its excitement had disappeared. These women were able to identify and act on these feelings, using it to launch their departures from their positions.

While the first strand likely produced seemingly random moves as surprise offers appeared, the second strand led to considered moves as the participants assessed the job and their own satisfaction. Often of course the strands' effects intersected but actual experiences influenced decisions for some more than others, especially as it related to positions

held later in their careers such as nursing education program administrators. Leaving those positions because of themes in the first strand emphasizes their own positive risk-taking attributes; they were concerned about program continuity and ensuring their successor followed existing plans. For those influenced by themes in the second strand, their departures were more subdued, and there was less concern about the fate of specific programs they had put in place. It is almost as if the first group emphasized the outcome of their work--cohesive staff and great programs--while the second group focused on the processes of administration.

There are some themes that wove through the participants' stories regarding how they handled leaving the nursing education programs. The leaders cared about how the programs operated after they left. Most decided to spend a considerable amount of time preparing others to take over program leadership while others continued to be associated with the program and provided assistance. Such a theme indicated to me that the leaders held responsible, ethical attitudes towards leaving their leadership positions. These behaviours enabled the leaders to achieve and maintain the respect of their colleagues and supervisors which would leave good feelings when the leaders did leave their offices to move on to another position or retirement.

Summary

The stories by the nine participants include themes and categories that facilitate interpretation of reasons why they left their career positions, especially the nursing education program administrator positions. Interpretation also allows explanation of how participants handled the

leaving from their nursing program leadership positions.

These participants were successful persons who moved on to other positions in their careers for different reasons. Opportunity was identified as a reason for moving on to another position by the participants. If the opportunity explained by the story tellers had not presented itself as it did when it did in their careers, participants probably would have taken a different career path. Some of the participants believed that they were just at the right place at the right time to move on. The participants were successful at what they were doing (often nursing program instruction) and were asked to become program leaders by institutional supervisors who assessed their leadership potential. Even though they accepted leadership positions, some of the participants did not perceive themselves as successful in their new positions, and they returned to the instructor positions where they did perceive themselves as successful. Others who perceived themselves to be successful in the leadership positions took the opportunity presented to them as new personal challenges and an opportunity to grow.

Intuition played a role in influencing the participants to move on more often implicitly than explicitly. One leader knew that for her, the time had come to retire and her intuitive perspective was respected. For other participants accomplishing the jobs given led them to believe that they could take on more complex positions or even move to another location. Although the other participants did not refer to intuition the participants must have used intuition in knowing when to risk taking the new position that was presented to them. Taking chances based on ones success must entail some sort of gut feelings. I do believe that is an

integral component of their thought before they decided to move on. Perception of a sense of accomplishment from the job enabled participants to accept new challenges in new positions. Some participants perceived themselves as change agents and wanted to take on new challenges such as program leadership. Therefore, when the opportunity arose to move into such a position, this was often their reason for accepting the new role, i.e., that they thought they could change the program in some way.

Participants respected the influence of their significant others, as without this influence they might not have justified to themselves their reasons for leaving one position to move on to another. I believe that the participants would not have made the choices they made had they not had the support of their significant others. Family, mentors, supervisors, colleagues and friends all played a role in the participant's review of reasons why and justification for leaving one position for another. Significant others were thus important to the participants in establishing reasons for moving on.

Job or position conflict existed for a number of the participants. Some found interpersonal, organizational, or power conflicts too much to accept, and these conflicts were explained by the participants as reason to look for a new position, to leave a current position, or to retire. Stress was common enough for some that levels of tension in their jobs made them question whether or not they should continue at them. Such pressure was perceived as taking time to build but eventually it would assist in identification of that which should not be done and clarifying for the participants their need to leave the position as soon as possible.

Participants identified within themselves the need to grow in knowledge and experience. All utilized the formal education system to attain higher levels of education which then provided participants with the ability to apply for or be asked to take on new positions, including program leadership positions. All participants liked a challenge of some sort or other.

When the time came to leave the nursing education program administrator position, participants explained in varying detail how they handled leaving the leadership positions. This suggests that how they handled leaving the leadership positions appears to be valued more by some than by others. While some wanted to spend a considerable amount of time preparing their colleagues or assisting the institution to find and orient a new person, others chose not to play any role in such a process. All seemed to have a caring attitude toward their colleagues and the goals of the institution, and did whatever they could to help during the transition period. Some took a long period of time to close their involvement with the program as they remained in the same institution, and this was perceived as positive by the participants in this situation. Other participants closed their positions with minimal thought and limited further activities with their colleagues and their successor as program leader.

CHAPTER SIX

REVIEW OF THE STUDY, FINDINGS FROM THE NINE STORIES, RELATING FINDINGS TO THE LITERATURE, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES, AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

This chapter contains three sections. In the first section summaries of the study questions, research perspective, and findings from the nine stories are presented. The second section includes a discussion of the relationship of study findings to the literature. The third section includes recommendations for future studies and personal reflections on the research process and the nine stories.

Review of the Study

In this section are presented summaries of the study questions, research design, and findings from the nine stories.

Statement of the Study Questions

The general purpose of the study was to attempt an understanding of why nursing education program administrators left their career positions and especially their positions as nursing education program administrators. This study also attempted to understand the explanations given by administrators of how they handled leaving their nursing program leadership positions. The study also provides a record of first-person stories of the career moves by a group of nursing education program administrators.

Research Design

The research design was an explanatory narrative study using first-person, autobiographical-style stories so that explanations by the

participants in their own words would answer the study questions. Participants were found via professional contacts and selected because they had voluntarily left a nursing education leadership position. Nine administrators volunteered to be participants. Cost restrictions on travel to interview the participants was a consideration since some of the potential participants were thousands of kilometres away from my residence. Potential participants were sent a letter stating the intent of the study and were asked to return a volunteer confirmation form. Volunteers were telephoned to explain the study questions. Only one participant had the study questions relayed via a personal secretary. Appointments were made and the interviews proceeded approximately two months after initial contact was made, which gave the participants ample time to think about the study questions. The story-telling sessions lasted from approximately forty minutes to one hour and twenty minutes. Interviews were conducted in the participants' offices or homes.

First-person stories are dependent on participants telling and recalling their stories as best as they can. Therefore, my intent was to follow Polkinghorne's (1988) suggestion that a retrospective gathering of events (the first-person stories) would allow me the opportunity to interpret the participants' explanations and to provide stories that are "reasonable" and "believable".

As it is critical to the success of using first-person stories, participants were asked further questions and were given the opportunity to review, alter, remove, or add to the story text since the story was in their own words (except for those words that improved the grammar aspects of the text and preserved the confidentiality of the story). Also critical to the

first-person method was the fact that participants had time to think about the general question being asked in the study before they were interviewed and they had time to reflect on the written text of their stories once I had adapted the stories. Participants had their story texts for up to five months before returning them for use in the study's interpretation and for insertion into this dissertation.

The chosen method of interviewing without prepared written questions was also important to the research design since it allowed each participant the ability to control the focus and content of the story. Some participants were initially brief when explaining why they moved on but when asked for expansion they did expand, often at some length. Consequently, each participant was asked via essentially similar questions to explain her career changes and the reasons behind such moves. The question about how the program leader handled leaving the program leadership position was added as a question during the field study interview, at which time the participant explained in some detail how she handled leaving the position, how she successfully closed her position, and severed attachment to the program.

Frequency of questioning the story-tellers and their explanations became a concern to me as I proceeded through the study. The choice between conducting one interview with further written questions for the participants to answer or a second interview to review or verify what was said in the first was difficult to decide. Instead of a second formal interview each participant was sent both the first-person story adapted from their taped interview and the original interview transcription, and was asked to explain in more detail what was meant in certain sentences.

This method seemed to work well; participants made changes to what they did not like and added to explanations as was their choice. When the stories were returned, each participant indicated acceptance of the first-person story as theirs and extended wishes for success of the study. These stories were then acknowledged by me and them as representative of their lives as they chose to tell at the time the stories were told and reviewed.

This process raises the issue of whether or not a story changes each time it is told. In the case of these nine stories, any changes made to the story by the participants did not change the explanation; they were only providing enhancements. In all cases, very few if any changes were made to the first-person stories other than grammar. A perception of truthfulness seemed to emerge reinforced by the opportunity given to the participants to review their first-person stories and make changes to the content, structure, or grammar so that they were comfortable with how their explanations were expressed. The participants were asked to tell their stories in sequence of events. Continuity of story is one of the most important characteristics of a first-person story method and it aided me in interpreting common categories when comparing the nine stories for categories and themes.

A paper trail was created, including a record of interview text; an adaptation of the interview text into a story; participant review and clarification in response to further questions; and changes and deletions made by participants to enhance their explanations. The sorting of story text into categories was kept as well as a separate page or two on emerging themes. The trail allows for continuity from interview to final

story as approved by each participant in this study. All steps taken thus enhance a quality (in this case first-person) narrative.

The nine stories were reviewed many times with the intention of finding common categories and themes and as expected categories and themes emerged, they in turn provided an understanding of the study questions.

Findings from the Nine Stories

Throughout their careers the nursing education program administrators had many reasons that provided justification for them to move on to other positions. Since each of the participants had individual reasons for moving on, one cannot generalize to any given group from the findings in this study (Polifroni and Packard, 1995, p. 41), but similarities in explanations of the reasons for leaving were common among the nine stories. The findings are organized under category general headings and then as themes.

Success and its Influence on Moving On. The nine participants were successful throughout their careers at the jobs they participated in so they were often presented with situations giving them opportunity to move on to other positions. Throughout their careers, participants did not plan a career but often thought of the future and possibly of some of the positions that they might want to try someday. Opportunities were often presented by other persons and participants responded to the encouragement of significant others.

Some participants indicated that a reason for moving on was being in the right place at the right time, perhaps holding this perception because when they thought about past positions offered there were no

clear indications that any other factors played a role.

Another of the reasons for leaving positions was that some of the participants who held leadership positions did not want to be leaders. Successful in their former positions, they had been persuaded by others that they would also be successful at leadership. As they indicated that they did not want to be administrators (even though they were convinced to be so by significant others) so when the opportunity came to move on to another position they used it to get out of the leadership position.

In her story one person recounted that her opportunity to retire was based on an intuitive knowing when it was time to leave the program leadership position. No one else made any reference to the intuitive process as playing any part in their reasons for moving on.

A few of the participants explained that they moved on to a new position because they had been successful at what they had been doing within their present organization. They had accomplished all the goals they had set out for themselves and the goals they wanted to achieve for the organization.

Three of the participants applied for new positions because they believed they could influence the organization's goals and bring about changes of benefit to those within the nursing unit or program of the institution where they were applying. These participants knew something of the new positions they were applying for and thus they could perceive themselves as potential change agents for the organizations.

Influence of Significant Others on Moving On. Throughout the nine stories the participants explained that they changed positions after they

consulted with significant others. The significant others were mentors, supervisors, colleagues, family members, relative, or friends. The significant others seemed to be considered of equal relevance for provision of reasons for leaving career positions. Stories indicate that the participants utilized other persons to explain their desire to move on, and in some cases the significant others were the first to indicate that it might be a good idea to consider another position. Once the idea of considering another position had occurred the participants didn't hesitate to share with someone their thoughts and concerns. Without the support of significant others most of the participants would not have taken leadership positions in nursing practice or in educational institutions. Even when considering leaving nursing program leadership positions most of the participants discussed their reasons with someone of significance to them. Without the support of others many of the participants probably would have stayed in their positions and not taken the risk or choices that were required of the opportunities offered to them by institutional leaders.

Influence of Position-Related Conflicts and Stress on Moving On.

Numerous participants experienced job conflict and stress in their career positions both as staff members and as nursing program leaders. The ability to attain personal goals was often interfered with by supervisors, institution management style, and organizations such as staff unions. In some career positions the desire to leave was based on the participants' personal beliefs being challenged by institutional norms and persons within an organization. When this occurred some of the participants tolerated the situation for awhile but personal stress often developed and

this stress became a reason to consider another position. Some of the participants had value conflicts with those reporting to them. This often developed into such a strong interpersonal conflict that such feelings became too difficult to deal with and the leaders explained it was more appropriate to move on than to stay and attempt to deal with continuing conflict. After a considerable time spent in a difficult organization, the participants would first consult with various significant others and then would leave the stressful positions. Timing of the leave was planned and the participants most often had another position to go to when they announced their intentions.

Influence of Personal Growth and Challenge on Moving On. During the era in which the participants worked increases in the need for further education developed. As all of the participants indicated that they wanted to pursue further education, participants did leave positions to return to school. Many wanted personal growth and were not too sure what type of positions they would apply for on completion of the educational programs. Many wanted new positions because of their need for new and more complex challenges. Often they perceived that they had met personal goals or had assisted the institution in reaching program goals, so once these goals were met a need to move on was identified.

Leaving the Leadership Position. When program leaders left the leadership of a nursing program how they handled leaving varied but there were two distinct groups as to how leaving was handled. Some of the leaders assisted the new nursing program leader in adapting to the position while others did not. Those who did not assist in the orientation

returned to an instructional position and thus were present and available to the new leader. In some situations the new leadership was chosen from the program faculty and an orientation by the former leader was not necessary. Those who did spend time in assisting the new leader often spent months with the person. The leaders were very attentive to effective communications with their supervisor and colleagues when informing them of their intent to leave the leadership positions. Family members were consulted regarding the timing of the departure from the leadership positions. The leaving process lasted from a few months to a few semesters. For some leaders the final days were memorable, and for others they were not. The act of leaving such a leadership position was well thought through and a very caring attitude towards others was evident in the leaders' stories.

Themes. Program leaders left both positions as well as program leadership during their careers because of opportunities that were presented to them. The leaders were successful in their career positions and were able to use this success to secure new positions. They were willing to take chances when changing positions while occupying the positions. Throughout their careers the leaders had continuous support from their significant others and any time a new opportunity was presented to them they were encouraged to tackle the new challenges.

Many of the leaders were frustrated by the ever-present interpersonal conflicts within their work environments, especially those involving supervisors and colleagues. As this type of work environment was not conducive to their beliefs and needs, they chose to seek out new positions. Many times participants felt the need for a new challenge

because the objectives of the institution and their personal objectives were being met; they were not interested in maintenance goals and were always looking for new challenges. The participants wanted new experiences; they all ended up as program leaders, not because of career planning but rather due to the influence of significant others and the leaders' personal self-confidence when taking on new positions.

Since they had been successful throughout their careers they had a strong experience base with which to evaluate their success as leaders. Some found the role of a program leader rewarding while others experienced too much interpersonal conflict and stress in it. Based on their individual experiences as leaders their terms in the leadership positions lasted until the leaders perceived the need to leave the positions. A few retired from the leadership position. A few returned to instructional positions. A few moved on to more complex institutional positions. Each perceived the decision to leave the leadership position as the most appropriate thing to do for themselves and for the benefit of the program.

The program leaders were a caring group when it came time to assist the new leader who was assuming the program leadership position. Some helped in the hiring process. Some stayed on after the new leader arrived to assist in leadership orientation. Throughout the leaving process the leaders attended to the needs of others by facilitating effective communication so that the outgoing leaders had a personal sense that their position closure had been successfully completed and they would be proud of how they handled their last few months and days of leadership.

Relating Findings to Prior Literature

This section discusses what the literature says about why people leave positions and what the participants said about why they left. It is organized under the patterns discovered in the data, the literature reviewed initially, and additional literature that became pertinent as a result of story interpretation.

Success, Opportunity, and Significant Others

Participants of this study were very successful nurses who had been presented with many opportunities and chances to move on to new positions and therefore can be called successful opportunists. The participants moved frequently over their careers and had considerable experience in deciding whether or not to choose a position. For few of the program leaders, even the decision to retire was based on successful careers as a program leaders. Before taking a chance on new positions participants always consulted with significant others. Reasons for accepting a new position are numerous and the following discussion compares some from the literature about moving on with reasons explained by the participants in their story-telling.

With successful achievement of program goals and personal goals, the intuitive thoughts of when to step down as a leader or to take an opportunity presented can occur to a person. In this study only one participant demonstrated the use of such a thought process: intuition was used as an explanation for leaving only by Mary, who stated she had "an inner sense" that it was time for her to move on to retirement from the nursing program administrator's position. Loden (cited in Dunham, Fisher, and Snelson, 1991) and Dunham (1991) would accept Mary

Beth's explanation as being similar to the idea that women can make career changes based on a sense or feeling that the choice was a good choice to make. Mary also indicated that she decided to retire "after much thought" which is similar to what Galamer and Heidegger (cited in Mitchell, 1994, p. 2) indicate is common--that people accumulate thoughts about their lives and then intuitively make decisions to do something such as retire. None of the participants gave any explanations that resembled Dunham's (1991), that it felt right or they were influenced by a higher power as reasons for moving on.

Throughout their careers the program leaders had plenty of choices when it came to accepting new opportunities of employment. They also were exposed to chance of opportunity within the institutions where they worked. Shorr and Zimmerman (cited in Dunham et al., 1991, p. 150) state that being in the right place at the right time along with luck will provide a person with an opportunity to change positions in his or her career. Laura was the only participant who credited being in the right place at the right time as an explanation for changing positions within her career. Other participants also were probably in the right place at the right time but didn't perceive themselves as such when telling their stories. Louise, Rose, Anna, Sue, and Betsy were asked by their supervisors or colleagues to apply for leadership positions. All accepted and therefore one could conclude that their presence in the nursing program provided the chance that they would be asked to apply for leadership positions.

Dunham et al. (1991, p. 150) state that executive nurses who were willing to seize opportunities presented to them got ahead in their

careers. All of the participants were presented with opportunities to change positions because they were successful at what they were doing; and all of them seized these opportunities to move on but some needed encouragement or support from significant others to do so.

Dunham et al. (1991, p. 152) found that nurse executives had need of a higher level of challenge beyond that which their present positions offered. Each of the participants changed positions at one time or another in order to hold a position that she perceived would offer a higher level of challenge. Laura, Betsy, and Anna moved from program leadership positions to senior executive positions in order to obtain a greater challenge in their careers.

Throughout the nine stories, the participants gave explanations of caring behaviours toward their colleagues, staff, and supervisors. In some cases such as with Josie when she did not care to be around a particular superordinate because of conflicts she moved on.

The participants had a "sense of commitment and responsibility" (Swanson, 1991, p. 165) towards others. In leaving the leadership position, those participants who explained in detail how they handled themselves and how they interacted with their colleagues indicated a sense of awareness of those persons' needs, attentions, and feelings (Bach et. al., cited in Komorita et. al., 1991, p. 24). Some of the participants such as Betsy, Laura, Josie, Mary, and Louise assisted their programs to undergo the process of changing leaders. This caring attitude towards their colleagues and the goals of the nursing programs are indicative of what Smith (1993, p. 66) identifies as actions of advocacy for their colleagues and the nursing program.

Personal and Program Challenges, and Conflict with Others

Throughout their stories the participants indicate that they were always seeking new personal and (in relationship to the leadership position) program challenges. Unfortunately the participants throughout their career did not always work in environments where their personal goals and their institutional goals were attainable. As the positions they held became more complex, their desire to maintain their positions varied; the decision to leave the position was often difficult but the reasons explained by the participants in the stories were very specific and aided them in the rationale for leaving.

In career stories, planning career positions and setting out to achieve those positions may be common but the stories told in this study did not indicate that the participants moved on because they had career plans. Some participants took education programs that gave them the choice of applying for teaching or supervisory positions but often they took whatever position was available after the program was finished. Eventually, when the opportunity came along to choose a teaching or supervisory position, their education program achievement provided a rationale for leaving one position for another.

While Hall, de Tornyay, and Mitsunaga (1983, pp. 274 - 277) found that few deans planned their careers in advance, most of the participants in this study planned on going into nursing education. They took baccalaureate courses in order to attain their goals but achievement of their education positions was based more on opportunity and chance than planning. In this study, none of the participants planned to be nursing education administrators, although Mary, Anna, and Ruth took

graduate education courses that included administrative theory. All became program leaders for the numerous reasons noted in this study. None planned on remaining in leadership positions although Mary stayed for some time and retired from a leadership position. Opportunity to move on is a common reason for leaving a position for the participants in this study and those who left program leadership positions did so to accept a variety of jobs. Some stayed with the institution as faculty members or further up the corporate ladder, within the same institution, which is what Hall et al. (1983) found common. Only one program leader changed from a college environment to a university teaching environment in order to meet her need for personal challenge. Not only did the participants not plan to be program administrators, some (like Sarah, Sue, and Louise) actively resisted the idea of being administrators at first but for reasons noted in the study they became program administrators with little or no planning.

The opportunity to have a stress-free and conflict-free environment in which to attain personal and program goals in many of the positions held in their careers was valued by the participants. Once they had become program leaders, a common reason for leaving was conflict--with students, colleagues, supervisors, institutional values, and in a few cases, conflict with organizations such as staff unions.

Sue, Mary, Louise, Josie, and Rose explained that conflicts and stress played a role in their reasons for leaving the program leadership roles as well as other positions during their careers. Although only one participant, Josie, referred to burnout (Alexander, cited in McConnell, 1982, p. 92) in her story; other participants such as Rose, Sue, Anna, and

Mary indicated that various leadership activities with students, faculty, colleagues, staff or supervisors caused a certain amount of stress in their lives, especially when they held nursing education program administrator positions. Most leaders indicated that they tolerated stressful events or outcomes such as extra hours of work, compromised values, family demands, conflicts within the working environment, powerlessness, and the political nature of work for some time before finally moving on from their leadership positions. Spaniol and Caputo (cited in McConnell, 1982, p. 112) would define these behaviours as indicative of the sources of stress common to professional workers. Rose and Sue especially were influenced by the conflict between job and home life as identified by Gottlieb, Kelloway, and Martin-Matthews (1996). Eventually the stress became such within themselves that they sided with parental concerns and this then became a reason for leaving their leadership positions. Copp (1995, p. 198) also explained that deans of nursing came home to care for their family members and found that their work role often "usurps" family time hence causing family role, work role conflict.

Mary and Louise defined conflict as occurring when their values were challenged by union values, producing stressful events that influenced their reasons for moving on to other positions and for Mary, retirement from the leadership position. Josie found herself in a power struggle with her chief executive officer (CEO) and felt betrayed by him so this became a reason for her to look for another position at another institution. Pines and Kanner (cited in Robinson, et al., 1991, p. 223) concur that power struggles and betrayal are reasons for leaving career positions. Young (1989, p. 218-220) found that female education

administrators, when telling their stories, felt they might have been more successful if they had an environment of female supervisors with whom they could function in regards to beliefs about practices and policies.

Shultz (1986, pp. 10-15) indicates that deans need better conflict management skills. Mary, Louise, Sue, Ruth, and Josie all explained that interpersonal conflict with persons such as their supervisors or organizations such as unions produced stressful feelings and consequently a desire to leave their leadership positions. These participants preferred working in effective groups so interpersonal conflicts did not allow them to attain program and personal goals. They were probably disillusioned about their roles and concluded that the best way to solve these conflicts was to leave the positions.

Woodtli (1987) identified that it is common for nursing deans to experience interpersonal conflict with their faculty and in their stories Rose, Anna, and Betsy hinted that such was the case for them. This type of conflict often lasted for months or even years for some of the participants. In their explanations of reasons for leaving, this type of conflict was considered a very important reason for leaving a position.

Pines and Kanner (cited in Robinson, Roth, Keim, Levenson, Flentje, and Bashor, 1991) found that, for nursing professionals, one of the consequences of burnout is job turnover. Among the participants, Sue and Rose indicated that the stress and burnout they experienced was so strong that they could not stay in their leadership positions and they returned to their former teaching positions.

Although Clark and Freunberger (cited in McConnell, 1982) found that nursing administrators in hospitals experienced enormous pressure

to perform well and reach the "ideal" none of the program administrators identified idealism and pressure to perform well as reasons for leaving positions during their careers. The participants did indicate in their explanations that they wanted to realize goals which would bring about needed change and this may be similar to idealism.

Shultz (1986, p. 14) indicates that effective communication skills are required of a program leader. None of the participants offered any examples of ineffective interpersonal communication skills although many examples of frustrations of working with others including not being able to communicate a message are given. Josie identified a sense of frustration and betrayal with one of her supervisors and she stated--"I could not work with this man again"--and decided that she did not want to work at that institution any longer. Her sense of betrayal interfered with her idea of effective communication with a supervisor and to her this was unsatisfactory.

In a similar way, Rose related that some of the communications coming from her institution administrators were causing personal frustration for her and her faculty as follows:

> There were some faculty members who became dissatisfied, and unhappy with what we were doing with the communications as they came down from administration levels which made the situations difficult to handle.

As identified by Shultz (1986, p. 10-15), this may have been perceived by Rose as ineffective communication on her part, thereby making her responsible in turn for any conflict or frustrations felt by the faculty.

All of the participants worked in institutions during their career.

Only one, Betsy, explained that she ventured into private practice while she was employed by an institution. Consequently, the following discussion provides insight on the story explanations for leaving positions and on how these reasons may be similar to reasons found by authors studying turnover from an organization's perspective.

In the literature, why people leave their positions of employment has been studied from an organizational perspective. This perspective can add to the understanding of personal reasons why participants leave their positions during their careers, specifically nursing education program leadership positions.

Since the interviews to gather explanations of moving on built on a general explanation of the study questions provided well in advance of the interviews (by a telephone conversation one to two months before the interview took place) participants had ample time to review their reasons for leaving their positions. During the interview, if a participant did not explain a reason clearly, questions were asked of the participant based on an understanding of turnover determinants gained from the literature such as those stated by Price (1977), Mueller and Price (1990), and Gurney (1990) but no list of questions was prepared beforehand. Thus, participant explanations may provide reasons which may or may not be similar to those in the literature on turnover.

Price (1977) indicates that individuals leaving positions because they are discharged, retiring, or being hired by another institution constitutes turnover. Mueller and Price (1990) include voluntary leaving as a form of turnover. Price (1977) does not consider a person given a promotion to another, higher-level job within the same institution as

turnover.

In this study, all of the participants meet the Price (1977) or Mueller and Price (1990) definitions of turnover. Betsy, Anna, Josie and Laura all applied for, or were asked by their supervisors to apply for, a higher-level executive position. None were promoted by their supervisors; all went through a competition of some sort. This voluntary choice to accept an executive position and leave the nursing program administrator's position constitutes turnover for this study. Betsy, Anna, and Josie each left a nursing position and entered into an institutional position that did not require nursing as a background. Josie left an institutional leadership position and accepted a nursing career program leadership position.

Price (1977) states that determinants can explain why turnover occurs. In this study, determinants are relevant to understanding the participants' explanations of their reasons for leaving career positions and nursing education leadership positions.

Both Mueller and Price (1990) and Gurney (1990) indicate that availability of job opportunities will lead to turnover. All study participants explained that they had most frequently moved on to other career positions because of job opportunities that were presented to them by others. In a few situations, opportunities were sought by the participants; for example, when Louise did not want to work in an environment where there was conflict between herself and the organizational goals of the teachers' union, she sought teaching opportunities in other provinces.

Mueller and Price (1990) and Gurney (1990) found that kinship responsibility or effects of kinship responsibility influenced reasons for turnover. All the participants consulted with significant others, friends, or

colleagues when they were considering another position. Without the support of their kinship group, friends, colleagues, and in some instances their supervisors, they would not have moved on to another position.

Workload (Gurney, 1990) was a definite determinant for Sue and Anna when it came to reasons for leaving their program leadership positions. Both found their job workloads were affecting their home roles and they did not appreciate this influence. Therefore, workload became a reason for moving on, including moving back to instructor positions.

General training (Mueller and Price, 1990), although a non-specific term, could apply as a determinant to turnover in this study. All of the participants but one completed a diploma registered nurse program as their entry into the profession of nursing. One participant entered her nursing career via a baccalaureate in nursing. After working at various jobs, the participants pursued further education in order to move on to other types of nursing positions in their careers. Some took a nursing diploma program at a university that featured administrative and education theory courses. This program eventually led participants Rose, Louise, Anna, Laura, Sue, Mary, and Sarah into teaching nursing education. Others took a baccalaureate in nursing and eventually entered the nursing education aspect of their careers. One participant Betsy entered nursing education with her baccalaureate and proceeded to a master's program in order to enhance her knowledge and this level of education led her into new career positions.

Participants Anna, Sue, Rose, Louise, Josie, Laura, Mary, and Sarah all completed a baccalaureate in nursing and then a master's program. Each level of education led them into new career positions.

Some participants completed a master's program while they were teaching in a nursing program. Mary completed her baccalaureate and master's program while she was active in the clinical practice component of her career. Because they held graduate degrees, all the participants were encouraged to apply for a variety of positions, including nursing program leadership positions.

No one in their story-telling referred to low pay, lack of community participation, low organizational commitment, dual career work, justice, or positive/negative affectivity as reason for moving on to another position (Mueller and Price, 1990 and Gurney, 1990).

Josie indicated that she was not satisfied with being a campus [director], which Mueller and Price (1990) would probably consider an example of lowered job satisfaction. Laura explained that she would find a job uninteresting and would then look for other opportunities.

Rose, and Anna asserted that they experienced some staff and student difficulties, which Mueller and Price (1990) would possibly refer to as examples of poor work group cohesion. Mary and Louise both explained that as they did not appreciate or agree with union beliefs, they had some difficulty identifying with a group such as the faculty union.

Gurney (1990) considers autonomy to be determinant of turnover. Possibly Sue is alluding to this when she explains that she was not at all pleased with her reporting requirements--reporting to a division dean--compared with those of other program leaders in similar negotiations who were themselves program leaders and who reported to vice-presidents.

Frustrations with the communications up and down (Gurney, 1990) the organizational ladder is another cause of turnover. Sue, Anna, Josie,

and Rose all indicated that communications, whether effective or ineffective, became important to the leader's role. All felt at times that communications were strained with various persons and that they did not like such an environment. They explained that this poor communications environment comprised one of the reasons for leaving their leadership positions. In Josie's case her displeasure was with the communications from a [CEO] and as a result she moved from a campus [director] position to a nursing program leadership position.

Mentorship (Gurney, 1990) played a positive role in encouraging participants to accept another position. Anna explained that she worked very well with her supervisor and mentor and agreed with her supervisor's ideas about education so the supervisor's approval of her acceptance of his position upon his retirement was important to her. Without this support, she might not have taken the senior leadership position. Louise encountered a positive mentor when she worked as a staff public health nurse, as a nursing instructor, and as a nursing program leader. She explains that the support for change given by her mentors was one of the reasons she accepted opportunities that were presented to her. Betsy also credited one of her mentors with influencing her to stay in nursing in her early days of her career.

Determinants for leaving a position are relevant to the themes found in this study. Comparing reasons for leaving a position found in the literature and in this study is relevant to demonstrate that the participants in this study are unique in their type of position but they share some common characteristics with other types of employees.

The information contained in this study and in the literature on

reasons for a leaving position add to the understanding of a particular group of women who chose to become nursing education program administrators. They were successful persons in their career positions and each of the positions they held in some way aided them to accept nursing education program leadership positions. The reasons why they left the positions they held show that the participants were influenced by many factors and made decisions based on these factors. They were particularly influenced by the fact that they were in chance positions and thus were often asked by significant others to move on to other positions. While they seemed to be able to focus on tasks required of the positions, these tasks often did not meet their expectations. Consequently, conflict would often develop, between themselves and the visions, politics, and interpersonal relations found in institutions. This study contributes to an understanding of how its participants thought they could handle their situations and what the reasons were for their leaving the positions rather than staying on and trying to adjust to the tasks required by the positions. In some cases, reasons for leaving exemplified a desire to accept more complex challenges presented by supervisors. This study also contributes to an understanding of the reasons for leaving the nursing leadership positions and accepting these new positions. In some cases, the participants explained they left their career positions and moved on to positions that they thought they might like to hold such as teaching in a nursing education program. Similar to this study of female nursing education program administrators, Young (1989, pp. 220-225) found success, opportunity, chance, and choice were relevant to the careers of four female education administrators.

Also, this study contributes to an understanding of the types of conflicts the participants faced in their positions and the conflicts created in the home environment due to their positions. The ability to manage their own positions and the increased complexity of the program leadership positions themselves resulted in a sense of frustration for some of these women. They had to care for their colleagues while (in their leadership position role) caring for program and institutional goals, as well as care for the administrators they worked with. The participants' stories provide an understanding of where this caring was directed and hence how this may have become a reason for leaving their positions. The study contributes to an understanding of how program leaders handled those last few months, and in some cases the last few semesters, leading up to their departures. It demonstrates that these women cared very much about how the programs would continue in their absence, not in an arrogant fashion but rather in a realistic, caring fashion. The leaders showed that they knew how to separate from their positions, some leaving and having no further influence over the program while others offered their skills and knowledge to the new leader. Some participants indicated that they still made themselves available for assistance even a few years after they left their positions as program leaders. This demonstrates a caring attitude towards program goals and the nursing profession, and the value to former colleagues that former leaders had as leaders.

Regarding the first-person format used: this study attempts to answer the question of what is truth as well as the occurrence of truth by telling participants' stories only one time. It explores the idea of gathering

information from one interview and written feedback (including further clarifications or expansion) of reasons given for moving on. This study's contribution is to offer the researcher an opportunity to explore use of the concept of minimal frequency of explaining lived events in a person's life by means of one interview and written interaction by both the researcher and the participant.

Recommendations for Future Studies

The study carried out indicates that there is a need for further study of nursing education program administrators and the reasons why they leave their leadership positions. Additional study is required to gain an understanding of how the program leaders handled leaving their leadership positions. Further study is needed to gain an understanding of the use of first-person stories in interpretative research as it would apply to participants such as those in this study. Having further stories available about the careers of program leaders including their reasons for moving on would undoubtedly provide more data on the subject.

Future research could explore the relationship between the leaders' reasons for leaving and the supervisor's perceptions of why nursing program leaders leave leadership positions. The reasons why program leaders leave their positions could also be studied from the perspective of faculty, colleagues, and students to see if the reasons for leaving in these views resemble the reasons given by the program leaders themselves. Further information about the reasons program leaders left their career positions could also be gathered from their various supervisors, colleagues and various significant others. The participants in this study did not plan a career that would contain specific

nursing positions. Therefore further study would be beneficial to find out if other nursing education program administrators planned via the positions and education they sought that would lead them to nursing education leadership positions. At the conclusion of the study I had noticed that I had expected to find certain reasons for moving on, an intuitive perspective, such as very frustrated nurse leaders, stories filled with conflict between the leaders and the staff, and reasons for moving on not told to anyone but a few family members. Yet, the stories contained some of the above but not in the frequency of my expectations before I started the study. Therefore further study needs to be carried out to explore others reasons that may not have been dealt with in the stories. Further literature review on reasons why some leaves a position may assist in identifying why a nursing education program administrators moved on.

Neither Polkinghorne's (1988) explanatory narrative theory nor other narrative researchers have provided extensive and detailed methods to analyze or interpret first-person stories. Future studies on program leaders using narrative theory and first-person stories will need to develop suggested methods of interpreting first-person stories. The very existence of such stories provides a record of first-person accounts that may be used by other researchers in their research studies. Riessman (1993) has identified the need for further study of autobiographical stories. This study provides a selection of records of program leaders telling their personal stories but there is a need to record first-person stories of program leaders for use in further studies. By using an accumulation of such published records in story format,

future researchers may be able to expand the understanding of program leaders and their reasons for leaving their positions. In this study, participants were interviewed once and had an opportunity to alter their lived lives to best reflect their personal stories. For further studies, researchers need to examine the number of times a researcher interviews the participant and reviews the explanations given in order to gain further information. This leads to the issue of the optimum number of times a participant needs to be interviewed before truth can be established by using first-person stories. Further studies can therefore debate this question.

Since the literature indicates that there is frequent turnover of nursing education leaders, further study should focus on comparing and contrasting those leaders who stay at their positions for some time and those who stay only for a few years. Also, since there are numerous types of locations still involved with nursing education (such as colleges, community colleges, and universities of various sizes) further study of their relevance to their environment should be considered. With the varying economic times of the past few decades, further study should focus on whether or not leaving a program position has an impact on the economic needs of the program leaders. Future studies could also focus on developing strategies for assisting program leaders to stay longer in their leadership positions. Significant others play a role in the reasons for moving on and subsequent studies should explore this role and its influences on nursing education program administrators. The absence of long-term planning was evident in the stories and this may be relevant to further studies of nursing program leaders who are female.

No study has been identified that utilizes determinants of turnover for this particular group of leaders; therefore, using interview questions based on common determinants may reveal data unique for understanding the leaders' reasons for leaving.

Personal Reflections

This chapter offers me the opportunity to reflect on the journey that I participated in over the years that it took to complete this study. The study has been valuable to me as a former program leader and as a person still practising nursing. I wanted to explore the stories that hopefully would contain the reasons why program leaders (in similar positions as I had held) would leave the program leadership positions. I had decided on the general intent of the dissertation question well before I had decided to enter full-time doctoral work. I had spent many meetings and after-meeting hours with my counterparts from a variety of education locations. Hence, my intent to explore stories without any formal theoretical approach was established well before I ventured into explanatory narrative research and the use of first-person stories. The discovery of using narrative framework, especially the explanatory approach as noted by Polkinghorne (1988) and Riessman (1993), provided the theoretical understanding that one could use first-person stories for such work. Also, I must say that my discovery of *The Norton Book of Women's Lives* by Rose (1993) and the first-person stories contained within it (particularly the one story about a mid-wife) provided me with the role model of first-person stories. I wanted to produce a study that contained the type of first-person account that one usually hears in private meetings with colleagues.

The study process has been long, with many arduous moments that seem to last forever but really were only hours or weeks. I found that since I was off-campus most of the time, I had to rely on myself to interpret the numerous articles and textbooks that I read. This created some self-doubt about these interpretations of these articles and the use of the interpretive method that is associated with narrative studies. I also gained an understanding of computing the many words of this study and my long-lost skill of typing came in very handy when I was trying to be creative in writing.

Once the stories were transcribed, adapted and sent to the participants for further questions and editorial changes, the task of interpreting their stories to find any common meaning was carried out. The process of interpreting the stories into categories and themes was a trying but rewarding task and was done during what I remember as a very long, warm and dry summer here in the far north of the province. During the story analysis I had the opportunity to explain what I was attempting to do to many of my cycling friends (usually scientifically-oriented engineers) as we cycled on long journeys on the district highways. Such discussions provided an incentive to pursue what I was trying to achieve. Since they had such a scientific approach to their thinking, they would ask me questions that made me rethink and certainly clarify my theoretical approach to the study.

I gained understanding of why the study's participants left their leadership positions and how they handled leaving the leadership positions. By including their career stories I gained an understanding of reasons for leaving career positions and how such reasons are similar to

reasons for leaving nursing education program leadership positions. I found that as the participants told their stories reasons for leaving were contained within them. The stories had been told to a select few, namely their significant others, who influenced participants' reasons for leaving their leadership positions and their career positions.

Participants of this study were successful at their career positions. They identified this within themselves and their significant others identified this characteristic in them as well. This then led to their ability to take chances and make choices when opportunities were presented either through their own discovery or by others. The participants did not plan to make career changes so they often had to have confidence in themselves, boosted by their significant others, to go ahead and take the risk of moving on to other positions. Once they had taken the risk of a new job they often found themselves in difficult situations that created personal stress and conflict within themselves. They were the type of professional who always tried to accomplish both the goals of the organization and their personal goals. In many situations the goals were unattainable and therefore they concluded the best decision would be to move on to another position. In some cases, they were asked by their supervisors to take on more complex administrative tasks and they could not resist the challenge. In an era of educational change, they took the challenge of attaining more education and this led them to opportunities that they had thought about but had not planned in their careers.

When it came time to move on to another position or to retire from the leadership position the program leaders had a very caring attitude towards their colleagues and the institution's goals. Most of the leaders

aided their colleagues and the new leader in a transition of leadership. Those who moved to faculty instruction positions were available to aid the new leader. The program leaders closed their leadership roles in a professional manner with appropriate communications of their decisions to leave the program. Many were able to maintain some contact with their colleagues in order to provide assistance to them in attaining the goals of the nursing program.

REFERENCES

Abbs, P. (1974). *Autobiography in education.* London, UK: Heinemann Educational Books.

Allen, R. E. (Ed.). (1991). *The concise Oxford dictionary of current English* (8th Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Anwar, R. S. (1983). *Organizational behaviour.* Agincourt,ON: Methuen Publications.

Astrom, G., Norberg, A., Hallberg, I. R., & Jansson, L. (1993). Experienced and skilled nurses' narratives of situations where caring action made a difference to the patient. *Scholarly Inquiry for Nursing Practice: An International Journal, 7*(3), 183-198.

Bailey, P. H. (1996). Assuring quality in narrative analysis. *Western Journal of Nursing Research, 18*(2), 186-194.

Boykin, A. (1990). Creating a caring environment: Moral obligations in the role of dean. In M. Leininger & J. Watson (Eds.), *The caring imperative in education* (Publication No. 41-2308, pp. 247-254). New York: National League for Nursing, Center for Human Caring.

Bruner, E. M. (1986). Experience and its expressions. In V. W. Turner & E. M. Bruner (Eds.), *The anthropology of experience* (pp. 3-30). Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Canadian Nurses Association. (1997). Code of Ethics for Nursing. Ottawa: Author.

Carpenter, K. D. (1989). Academic middle managers for baccalaureate nursing: Work motivation and satisfaction. *Journal of Nursing Education, 28*(6), 256-264.

Carter, K. (1993). The place of story in the study of teaching and teacher

education. *Educational Researcher, 22*(1), 5-12, 18.

Cavanagh, S. J. (1991). The conflict management style of staff nurses and nurse managers. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 16*, 1254-1260.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher, 19*(5), 2-14.

Copp, L. A. (1995). When the dean steps down. *Journal of Professional Nursing, 11*(4), 197-198.

Denzin, N. K. (1989). *Interpretive Biography (Sage University Paper Series in Qualitative Research Methods, Volume 17).* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Deutsch, M. (1973). *The resolution of conflict.* London: Yale University Press.

Dick, M. J. (1992). Burnout in doctorally-prepared nurse faculty. *Journal of Nursing Education, 31*(8), 341-346.

Dunham, J., Fisher, E., & Snelson, C. (1991). Nurse executives: decision points in their careers. *Nursing Economics, 9*(3), 149-158.

Filley, A. C. (1975). *Interpersonal conflict resolution. Philippines: Harper Collins.*

Frank, B. (1986). The dean's job satisfaction: its relationship to organizational structure. *Journal of Nursing Education, 25*(2), 59-63.

Gasper, T. M. (1990). *Job satisfaction of chairpersons of nursing departments in academe.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation.

University of Utah.

Gottlieb, B. H., Kelloway, E. K., & Martin-Matthews, A. (1996). Predictors of work-family conflict, stress, and job satisfaction among nurses. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research, 28*(2), 99-117.

Grove, R. W. (1981). An analysis of the constant comparative method. *International Jouranal of Qualitative Study in Education, 1*(3), 273-280.

Gurney, C. (1990). *Determinants of intent to leave among nurses with doctoral degrees*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University Of Illinois at Chicago.

Hall, B. A., de Tornyay, R., & Mitsunaya, B. K. (1983). Deans in nursing: how do they see their future? *Journal of Nursing Education, 22*(7), 274-277.

Hannah, K. J. N. (1981). *A descriptive study of the administrative behaviour of nursing deans in Canadian universities*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Alberta.

Heinrich, K. T. (1992). Create a tradition: Teach nurses to share stories. *Journal of Nursing Education, 31*(3), 141-143.

Henderson, F. C. & McGettigan, B. O. (1994). *Managing your career in nursing* (2nd Ed.). (Publication No. 14-2640). New York: National League for Nursing Press.

Hennig, M. & Jardim, A. (1977). *The managerial woman*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday.

Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (1994). Data management and analysis methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 428-444). Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage.

Irvine, D. M., & Evans, M. G. (1995). Job satisfaction and turnover among nurses: Intergrating research findings across studies. *Nursing Research, 44*(4), 246-253.

Komorita, N. I., Doehring, K. M., & Hirchert, P. W. (1991). Perceptions of caring by nurse educators. *Journal of Nursing Education, 30*(1), 23-29.

Kahn, R. L., Wolfe, D. M., Quinn, R. P., & Snoek, J. D. (1964). *Organizational stress: Studies in role conflict and ambiguity.* New York: Wiley.

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Lyons, R. (1977). *Autobiography: A Reader for Writers.* New York: Oxford University Press.

McConnell, E. A. (1982). *Burnout in the nursing profession, ccping strategies, causes, and costs.* St. Louis, MO: Mosby.

Miller, P. G., Heller, B. R., Moore, H. W., & Sylvia, B. A. (1987). Research in nursing education administration: state of the art. *Journal of Professional Nursing, 3*(3), 143-147.

Mishler, E. G. (1986). *Research Interviewing.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mishler, E. G. (1990). Validation in inquiry-guided research: The role of exemplars in narrative studies. *Harvard Educational Review, 60*(4), 415-442.

Mitchell, G. J. (1994). Intuitive knowing: Exposing a myth in theory development. *Nursing Science Quarterly, 7*(1), 2-3.

Mobley, W. H. (1982). *Employee turnover: causes, consequences, and*

control. Redwood City, CA: Addison-Wesley.

Mueller, C. W., & McCloskey, J. C. (1990). Nurses' job satisfaction: A proposed measure. *Nursing Research, 39*(2), 113-117.

Mueller, C. W., & Price, J. L. (1990). Economic, psychological, and sociological determiniants of voluntary turnover. *The Journal of Behavioral Economics, 19*(3), 321-335.

Parse, R. R. (1996). Buiding knowledge through qualitative research: The road less traveled. *Nursing Science Quarterly, 9*(1), 10-16.

Polifroni, E. C., & Packard, S. A. (1995). Explanation in nursing science. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research, 27*(2), 35-44.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Price, J. (1977). *The study of turnover.* Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press.

Rawl, S. M., & Peterson, L. M. (1992). Nursing education administrators: Level of career development and mentoring. *Journal of Professional Nursing, 8*(3), 161-169.

Redmond, G. M. (1991). Life and career pathways of deans in nursing programs. *Journal of Professional Nursing,* (4), 228-238.

Riessman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Robinson, S. E., Roth, S. L., Keim, J., Levenson, M., Flentje, J. R., & Bashor, K. (1991). Nurse burnout: work related and demographic factors as culprits. *Research in Nursing and Health, 14* (3), 223-228.

Rose, P. (Ed.). (1993). *The norton book of women's lives.* New York: W. W. Norton.

Rudestam, K. E., & Newton, R. R. (1992). *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Sandelowski, M. (1991). Telling stories: narrative approaches in qualitative research. *Image: Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 23*(3), 161-166.

Scase, R., & Goffee, R. (1989). *Reluctant managers: Their work and lifestyles.* London: Unwin Hyman.

Shultz, C. M. (1986). Communication skill performance and needs of deans. *Nurse Educator, 11*(6), 10-15.

Smith, M. C. (1993). The contribution of nursing theory to nursing administration practice. *Image: Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 25*(1), 63-67.

Swanson, K. M. (1991). Empirical development of a middle-range theory of caring. *Nursing Research, 40*(3), 161-166.

Thorpe, K. M. (1989). *Interpreting the activities of nursing educational administrators: a leadership perspective.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Alberta.

Van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: human science for an action sensitive pedagogy.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Wilson, H. S. (1993). *Introducing research in nursing.* (2nd Ed.). Redwood City, CA: Addison-Wesley.

Woodtli, A O. (1987). Deans of nursing: perceived sources of conflict and conflict-handling modes. *Journal of Nursing Education , 26* (7), 272-277.

Yoder, L. (1995). Staff nurses' career development relationships and self-reports of professionalism, job satisfaction, and intent to stay. *Nursing Research, 44*(5), 290-297.

Young, B. (1989). Not finished yet: the stories of four women's careers in education. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Alberta.

Zuelke, D. C. & Willerman, M. (1987). *Conflict and decision making in elementary schools*. New York: University Press of America.